

**HOW WALL  
STREET'S  
CROOKS  
EVADED JAIL**  
By **MATT TAIBBI**

**THE CLASH**  
THE SECRET HISTORY OF  
PUNK'S GREATEST BAND

**THE RETURN OF  
BEAVIS AND  
BUTT-HEAD**

**THE CARS  
REUNITE**

**THE DECEMBERISTS**  
**CONOR OBERST**

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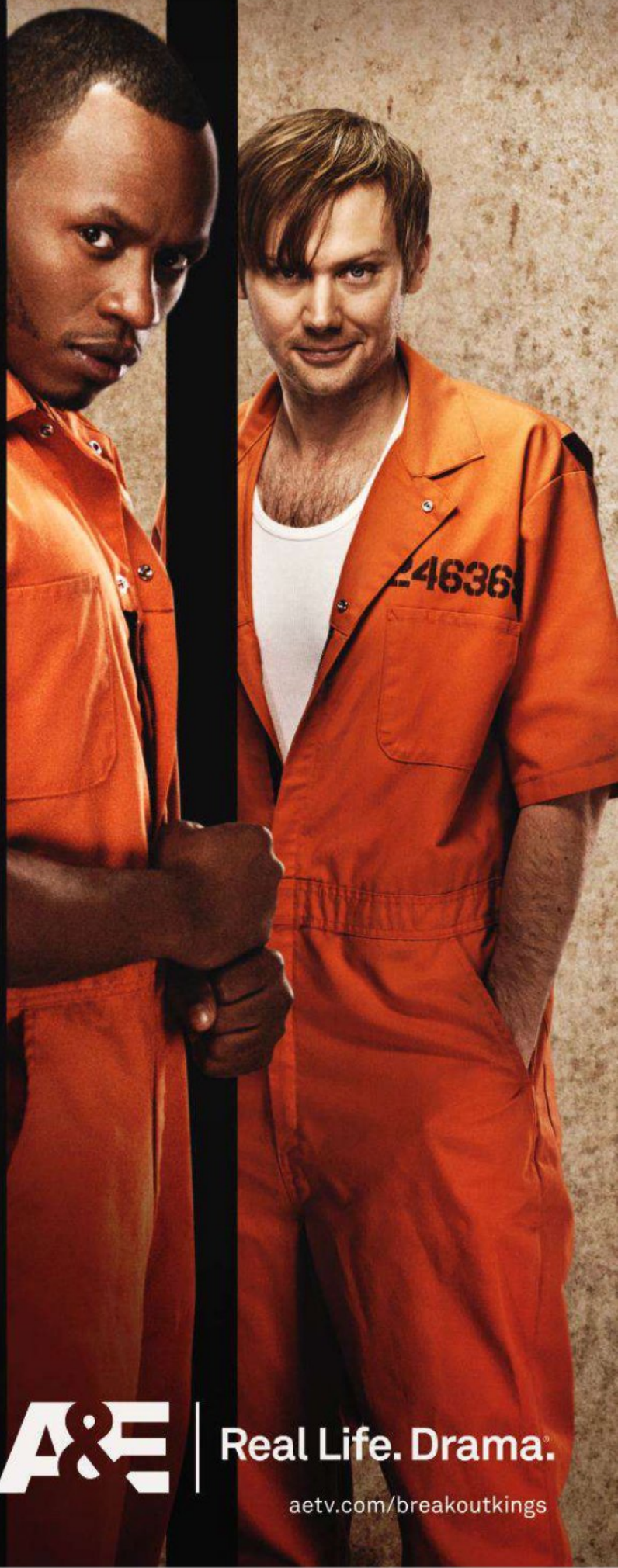
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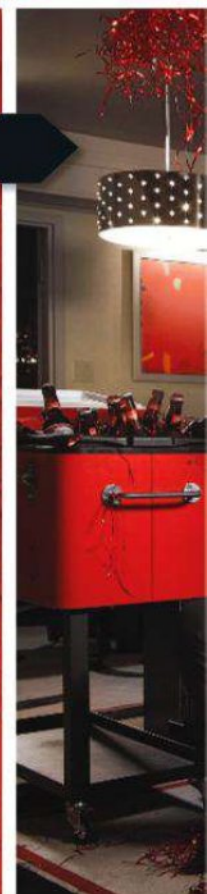
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BUDSTERS' PHOTO BY **Christian Lantry**

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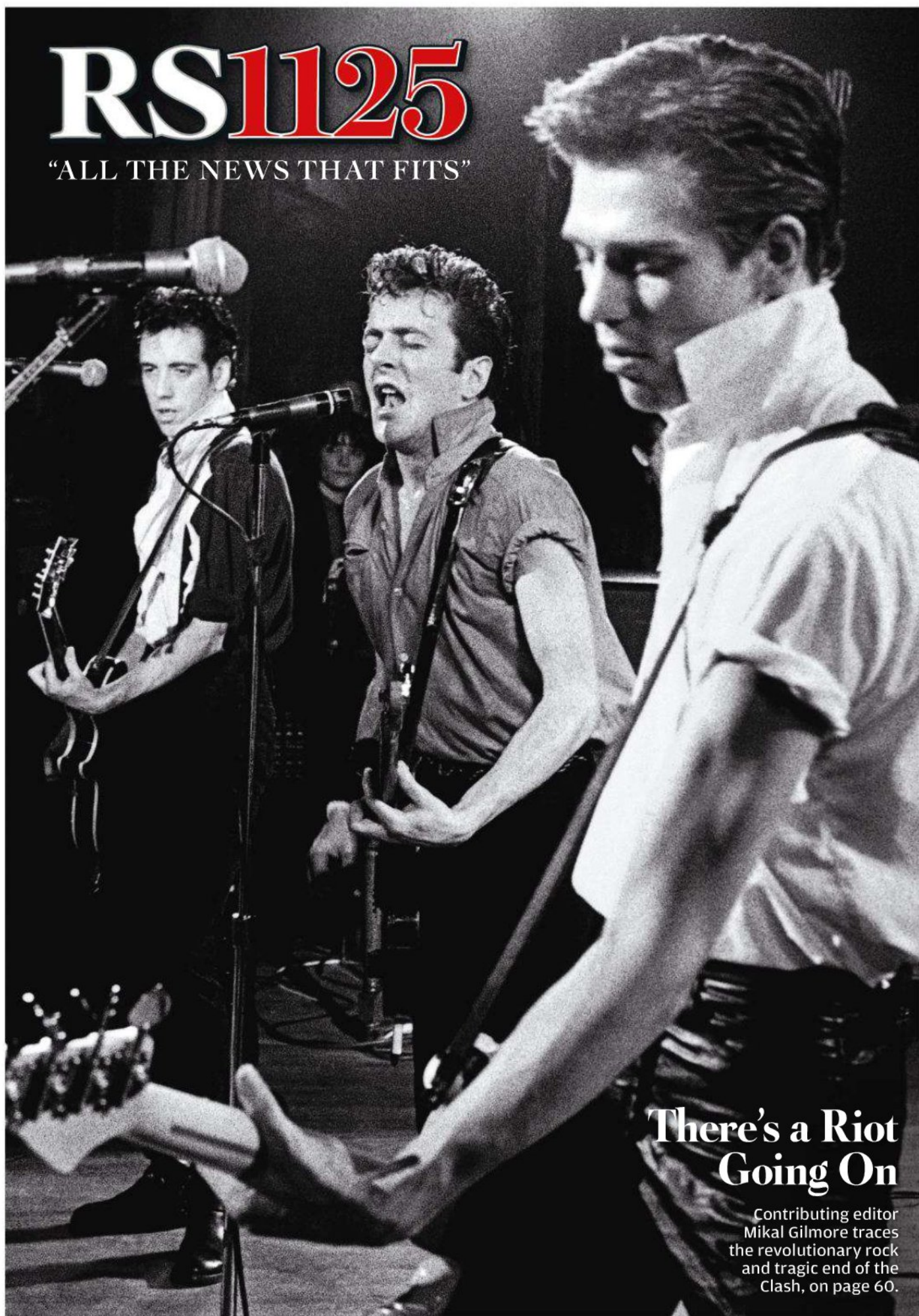


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# RS1125

"ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS"



## There's a Riot Going On

Contributing editor  
Mikal Gilmore traces  
the revolutionary rock  
and tragic end of the  
Clash, on page 60.



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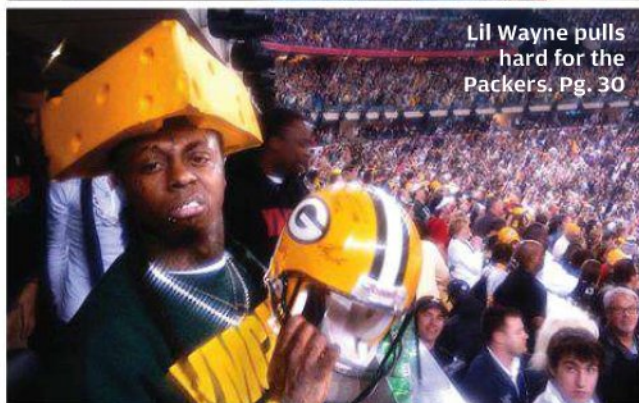
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Lil Wayne pulls hard for the Packers. Pg. 30

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**ON THE COVER** Justin Bieber photographed at Milk Studios, Los Angeles, on January 28th, 2011, by **Terry Richardson**.

Prop styling by Rick Floyd. Styling by Leslie Lessin for Brydges Mackinney, and Maya Fox-Davis and Ashley North for M&A Style. Grooming by Vanessa Price for the Rex Agency using Davines. Jacket by UNIF Clothing, tank top by Hanes, chain by Loree Rodkin.



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MAIN OFFICES  
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NATIONAL MUSIC ADVERTISING: 441 Lexington Ave.  
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## Oscars Preview

Will the big winner be *The King's Speech* or *The Social Network*? ROLLING STONE movie critic Peter Travers handicaps the Academy Awards. Plus: Our take on who should have made the ballot.

## Inside Bieberland

From Usher to Selena: a guide to the Bieber universe. Plus: Behind-the-scenes video of his RS cover shoot, and Justin answers fan questions.



Usher  
and  
Bieber

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### ROLLING STONE LIVE

#### Iron and Wine Visits

Sam Beam performs an acoustic version of "Half Moon" in the RS offices.

### WEEKEND ROCK LIST

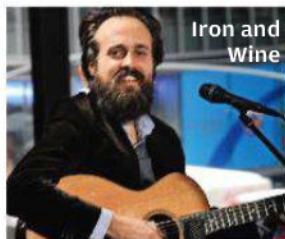
#### Greatest Drummers

Neil Peart or John Bonham? ROLLING STONE readers pick rock's all-time best drummers.

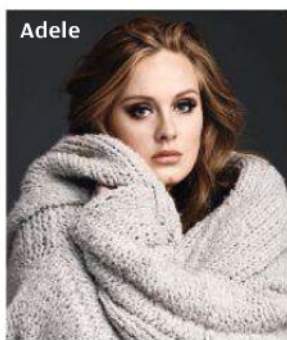
### RANDOM NOTES

#### Rock's Hottest Photos, Updated Every Day

A running tally of surprise events, court appearances, Lady Gaga's new looks and much more.



Iron and  
Wine



Adele

### VIDEOS

#### Adele Prepares Her New Album

The "Chasing Pavements" singer talks to ROLLING STONE about her new album, 21, co-produced by Rick Rubin.

### EXCLUSIVE AUDIO

#### Johnny Cash: The Bootleg Series

Hear a demo of the Cash track "Get Rhythm" from his upcoming collection of rarities, due this month.

### BLOGS

#### Daily Dispatches From ROLLING STONE Writers

Matt Taibbi and Tim Dickinson on politics, David Fricke on music, Peter Travers on movies and Rob Sheffield on pop culture.

### PHOTO GALLERY

#### Classic Clash Photos

From London clubs in the Seventies to playing Shea Stadium: a photo history of the only band that mattered.



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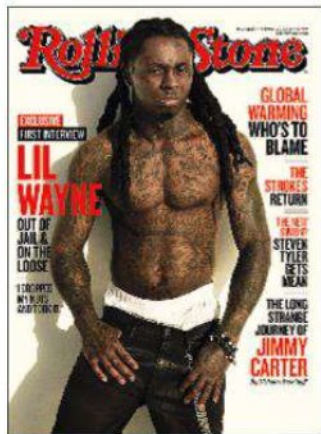
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# Correspondence

## { Love Letters & Advice }



### Wayne's World

JOSH EELLS' INTERVIEW with Lil Wayne ["Return of the Hip-Hop King," RS 1123] was truly an eye-opening look at today's most oddly inspiring performer. Your cover stories always make my day.

*Diana E. Miller  
Hilton Head Island, SC*

ADMITTEDLY, I DON'T KNOW Lil Wayne's music, but he comes off in your cover story as a lil' monster. I can't help but think that the black musical giants who preceded him, like Louis Armstrong, John Coltrane and Bob Marley, must be spinning in their graves.

*John Fogarty, Gloucester, MA*

LIL WAYNE IS A GREAT RAPPER, but your cover story has absolutely nothing to do with music – it's strictly about celebrity life in America. Any

noncelebrity going to prison wouldn't be put in the protective-custody ward – they'd be thrown into the general population, where life is decidedly not so fun.

*Jess Folk, via the Internet*

EELLS PERFECTLY CAPTURES Lil Wayne's relief, joy and even trepidation at having his life back. It was fascinating to read about his time in the clink – only Weezy could make an eight-month prison stint sound like fun. (Uno games! Radio parties! Pop-Tarts!) Wayne couldn't have asked for a better welcome home than this story.

*Molly Stevens, via the Internet*

### The Real Carter

"THE RIDDLE OF JIMMY CARTER" [RS 1123] is a true service to your readers. The article delivers an important history lesson, especially for Americans who are too young to remember Carter's presidency. It's a shame that Carter's name has become a pejorative when comparisons are made with President Obama. Both men are thoughtful, intelligent and complex figures who have made a lasting impact on American life.

*Andy Hobbs, Tacoma, WA*

I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED Nicholas Dawidoff's expansive portrait of Jimmy Carter. Too

often articles about the former president are exercises in either ridicule or hagiography. Dawidoff shows us that Carter isn't the demon portrayed by conservatives, nor the selfless martyr envisioned by his supporters. He is, rather, both a calculating and a compassionate man.

*Wayne Trujillo, Denver*

THE FACT THAT CARTER IS often criticized as being too honest says more about the flaws in our political system than it does about him.

*Mike Parsons, Macomb, MI*

**"The dichotomy between your stories on Lil Wayne and Jimmy Carter is why I subscribe to RS."**

SEVERAL TIMES IN DAWIDOFF's piece, he and Carter ruminate on whether a single term is a sign of a failed presidency. Carter's one term (as well as the two of George W. Bush) clearly proves otherwise.

*Robert Wolpert, Jupiter, FL*

THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN your stories on Lil Wayne and Jimmy Carter is why I subscribe. I learned some things about Lil Wayne, even though I find him vapid, while the Carter feature was inspiring in its depth and nuance.

*Dan Shepherd, Purcellville, VA*

YOUR LOOK AT JIMMY Carter was one of the best profiles in years. So why did Carter have to cede the cover to a felon of negligible talent? Seriously. Please rethink that kind of decision for those of your readers who don't just look at the pictures.

*Erica Russo, Baltimore*

*The editors reply: We think Carter would be pleased that things have come so far that a black Southern rapper who shares his last name would beat out a former president for the cover.*

### Palin's Guilt

JEFF GOODELL'S PIECE ON global warming ["Who's to Blame," RS 1123] and Tim Dickinson's look at the Arizona shooting ["The Rampage in Tucson," RS 1123] further illustrate that Sarah Palin is one of

the most reprehensible figures to ever get into American politics. You guys should be proud of the fine work you do. Keep it coming!

*Cameron T. Ward, Anderson, IN*

### Back to School

I COULDN'T AGREE WITH Rob Sheffield more [Television, RS 1123]. At first, *Community* was something to get through while waiting for *30 Rock*, but it just gets better. The shows that follow have all peaked.

*Michael Salkind  
Colorado Springs, CO*

*Correction: In RS 1124, we misspelled the name of the murdered Ugandan gay-rights activist David Kato. We regret the error.*

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### What They're Saying about "The Crying Shame of John Boehner" [RS 1122]

MATT TAIBBI'S STORY ON the new Speaker of the House, John Boehner, drew widespread praise. Daily Kos hailed Taibbi as "the best political reporter in the country." The libertarian Reason.com wrote that Taibbi was "turning his comic acid" on Boehner. But in the wake of the Tucson shootings, the part of the story that caught the most attention was Taibbi's



report that Boehner called a Democratic congressman who voted for Obamacare a "dead man" in early 2010. After noting the exchange, Scott Horton of *Harper's* asked if Boehner will use his office "to shift the tone of political discourse away from the violent hyperbole and hysteria that have so deeply poisoned it." We wish we were optimistic.



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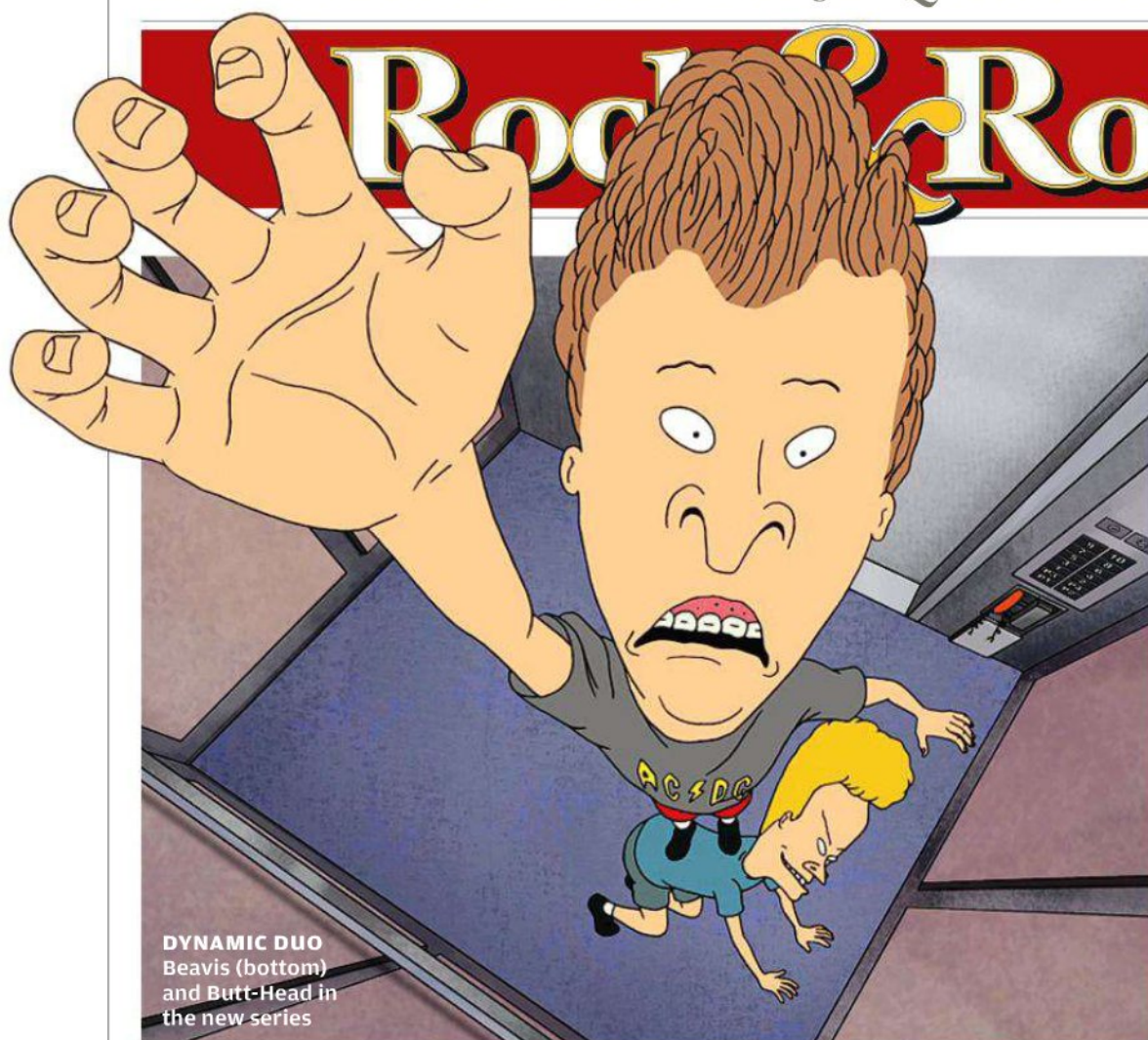
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DYNAMIC DUO  
Beavis (bottom)  
and Butt-Head in  
the new series

# Beavis and Butt-Head Rock Again on MTV

The animated duo return to a world that includes YouTube, 'Jersey Shore'  
By Andy Greene

**A**BOUT A YEAR AGO, MTV president Van Toffler was having trouble sleeping. "I was eating Fruit Loops and Cap'n Crunch out of the box and flipping through the dials when a Lady Gaga video came on," he says. That's when he had the idea: Bring back Beavis and Butt-Head. "I felt like there was a whole crop of new artists – and what the world sorely missed was the point of view that only Beavis and Butt-Head could bring."

The new show, which debuts later this year, will be very fa-

miliar to fans of the Nineties original. "They'll be self-contained segments with the boys in different situations like they used to be," Toffler says. "But this time around, they'll watch *Jersey Shore*, UFC

**"They're the same boneheads sitting on the same couch," says MTV's Toffler.**

matches and user-generated videos from YouTube, in addition to music videos." All of the programming will be displayed on the duo's TV, even if it comes from YouTube – "like silly videos of cats playing music."

The show's creator, Mike Judge, who went on to create *King of the Hill* and direct the cult classics *Office Space* and *Idiocracy*, is returning to helm the new series. "In the years since Mike quit doing *Beavis and Butt-Head*, he realized that there was a lot to make fun of," says head writer John Altschuler, a veteran of *King of the Hill*. "We just kept coming up with ideas that Mike thought would have made good *Beavis and Butt-Head* episodes. Then one day, Mike said, 'Maybe we should just actually make some good *Beavis and Butt-Head* episodes.'"

Beavis and Butt-Head would be in their thirties by now, but they will remain [Cont. on 16]

## Where Did the Rock Hits Go?

In 2010, there wasn't a single major rock hit. What happened?

By Steve Knopper

**I**N THE ENTIRE HISTORY of rock & roll, 2010 was a commercial low point, a year without hits. Not a single rock record wound up in the year-end Top 25. Jack Johnson's *To the Sea* scored highest, coming in at Number 27. In an era of tanking sales, rock did even worse than the competition, falling more sharply than country, hip-hop or pop. And bands that sold millions of copies of their last albums, from Linkin Park to the Kings of Leon, stiffed. Says Doug Podell, a veteran Detroit programmer who is now a consultant and WCSX classic-rock DJ, "Rock isn't dead yet, but it's getting pushed around pretty good."

So what happened? ROLLING STONE spoke to 21 music-business sources, and the picture that emerged was of a rock drought driven by two forces: a lack of compelling mainstream releases and broad, industrywide trends that work against the genre.

The first problem is partially the result of top acts' release cycles coincidentally making 2010 an off year. "There just weren't that many strong releases," says Ish Cuebas, Trans World



Entertainment's vice president for merchandising music. Even Mike Shinoda, Linkin Park's co-founder, didn't find much to listen to: "As a music listener, I was gravitating a little bit away from [new] rock records, because stylistically it was a little boring."

But rock's real problems are trickier, and interconnected. Many in the business blame radio for failing to break a major album for the first time in memory. (Even in 2000, the year of Britney and boy bands, Creed's *Human Clay* sold 6.5 million copies.) Thanks to important stations switching formats in recent years, a Number One rock-radio hit reaches just 12 million listeners, compared with 81 million for Top 40. This gap is far wider than it was in 2009 or 2006, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And many of the stations that are left have seen their ratings fall. "I don't know if it's cyclical – it's problematic," says Richard Palmese, executive vice president for promotion at the RCA Music Group, home of the Kings of Leon and Daughtry. "Rock-radio stations are struggling in markets around the country to deliver winning ratings."

In addition, two of rock's biggest subgenres petered out in 2010 – emo/pop-punk and Nickelback-and-Shinedown-style "active" rock. "Emo had its heyday – then there were too many bands that sounded like Fall Out Boy," says Bob McLynn, manager of that band, as well as Hole, Train and Panic! at the Disco. As a result, major record labels are shying away from signing new rock acts and spending less money on the ones they have, according to industry sources.



**COLDPLAY** The Brit band leads a strong field of rock acts expected to release new albums in 2011, including Radiohead, U2, Green Day and Foo Fighters.



**LINKIN PARK** Sluggish sales of *A Thousand Suns* brought the album to a disappointing year-end tally of just 619,000 units moved – a fraction of their previous releases.



**KINGS OF LEON** Without a radio hit like 2008's "Use Somebody," *Come Around Sundown* has failed to go gold in the months since its October release.

"[Labels] seem like they don't want to be in that business anymore – not ideally, anyway," says Peter Katsis, manager of Korn and Jane's Addiction. "You're just seeing them spend a lot less money on marketing and promoting rock acts."

Major labels have also made 360-degree deals the standard for new acts, which gives the labels a cut of concert and merchandise sales. With majors and rock radio losing their power to reliably produce hits, bands that do well on the road have little incentive to sign such deals. "We still are extremely, extremely focused on bands

who can tour," says James Diener, president of A&M/Octone, which reps Flyleaf and Maroon 5.

Given the unfriendly environment, top artists have begun fleeing the majors, either to release music on their own (Wilco, Nine Inch Nails, Radiohead) or to shift to smaller, more attentive labels, as Paul McCartney and Paul Simon have done with Concord Music Group. Says Tony Margherita, Wilco's manager, "For a certain level of artist who has spent some time building a career and has a fan base, the structure and the services pro-

vided by a major label – and the percentage they take to provide those services – doesn't make a lot of sense."

Rock maintains its dominance in one crucial area: touring. Bon Jovi, Roger Waters and the Dave Matthews Band were *Pollstar's* top three acts on the road last year, grossing a combined \$270 million.

A new middle class of bands – Arcade Fire, the National and Spoon – all sold respectable numbers of records while thriving on the road, without needing hits on rock radio. Some of those, like Mumford and Sons, Vampire Weekend and the Black Keys, thrived by touring relentlessly and breaking their singles via college stations, SiriusXM programs and ad licensing to clients from Cadillac to Tommy Hilfiger. "If you look at the most prominent festivals – Coachella, Bonnaroo, Austin City Limits – they're doing pretty good business with basically a rock-band format," says Daniel Glass, chief executive of Glassnote Entertainment Group, Mumford and Sons' independent label. "The club business, in most parts of America, also has a healthy circuit of artists that are touring and doing quite well."

And 2011 looks better than 2010, with planned releases by superstar rock acts including Green Day, Coldplay, Radiohead, R.E.M., the Strokes, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, U2 and Foo Fighters. "It's just the cycle," says Rob McDermott, former manager of Linkin Park. "The 'Is Rock Sleeping?' article comes out every five years, and I actually think it's the greatest article in the world, because you're foreshadowing it's about to make a big comeback." 🐼

## BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD

[Cont. from 15] the teenagers they were during the original run. "They'll have the same intelligence," Toffler says. "They're the same boneheads sitting on the same couch, com-

menting on things through a really simple prism." He has no fear that younger viewers won't respond to the show. "Look how popular *South Park* and *Family Guy* are," he says. "These boys are beloved characters, and even if you didn't know

them the first time around, it doesn't take more than 30 seconds to fall in love with them."

MTV plans to promote the program across multiple media platforms. "It will be much more viral this time around," Toffler says. "We're going to

plant seeds of the characters throughout social-media networks like Facebook and Twitter, in addition to traditional programming on television and, potentially, in theaters. It's formatted very well for the Internet because it's short-form." 🐼





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# IN THE STUDIO



**SHAKE IT UP**  
Easton, Ocasek,  
Hawkes and  
Robinson (from  
left) in New York

## New Wave Heroes the Cars Roar Back on Reunion Record

**Ric Ocasek and crew cut their first disc in decades, 'Move Like This'**

**T**HIS IS NOT A REUNION – it's more like a conjunction. That is how singer-guitarist-songwriter Ric Ocasek of the Cars describes *Move Like This*, the New Wave band's first studio album in 24 years. "I never thought I'd make another Cars record," he claims, citing "the past, personalities and Ben's passing away" – the death in 2000 of bassist-singer Benjamin Orr.

But a year ago, Ocasek – a producer and periodic solo artist – found himself with new songs, "a lot of which I liked," he says. "It dawned on me: 'What if I called the guys? They'll do the best job, because they already know the whole thing.'"

To be released on May 10th by Hear Music, *Move Like This* was recorded last year in Los Angeles and upstate New York by the entire surviving band: Ocasek, drummer David Robinson, guitarist Elliot Easton and keyboard player Greg Hawkes. Gareth "Jackknife" Lee, who has worked with U2 and

R.E.M., produced five tracks; the band did the rest. Lee and Hawkes split the bass duties. Ocasek, who left the vocal spotlight to Orr's rich tenor on hits like 1978's "Just What I Needed" and the 1984 ballad "Drive," sang all 10 songs.

"I was aware that on half of the new songs, Ben would have done better than I did," Ocasek concedes. "But we never wanted anybody from the outside." Orr was actually present, in spir-

**After a 23-year holdout, "What got it together was these songs," says Ocasek.**

it, at many sessions: Hawkes played one of his old basses, now owned by Robinson. "Ben would have been there if he had been alive," Hawkes says. "That's the only way we could think about it."

In all other ways, new songs such as "Hits Me," "Free" and "Blue Tip" are a total recall of the precise swagger, art-rock minimalism and chrome-gleam pop on the Top Five

LPs *Candy-O* (1979), *Panorama* (1980) and *Heartbeat City* (1984). "We were there for the songs," Ocasek says of the Cars' original hit streak. "This album carries that through."

Hawkes admits he was "fairly surprised" when Ocasek called him about a new record. After the Cars broke up in 1988 over personal tensions and fading success, Ocasek refused to consider a reunion. "I held out," he notes, "for 23 years." He reluctantly gave his blessing when Hawkes and Easton toured in 2005 as the New Cars, with dire results. But Ocasek insists "the only thing that got it together again was these songs."

"I wouldn't mind doing more records," Ocasek adds, although he is leery of touring. "This is not 'We're back, and you're gonna hear the hits.'" Rumors of Coachella or Lollapalooza gigs this year are, so far, just that. "It might be fun to do a couple of shows," Ocasek says. And he's ready to do his best when it's time to sing "Drive." "People would just say, 'He doesn't sing it as good as Ben, but what the fuck – he's the guy who wrote it.'" **DAVID FRICKE**

## IN THE NEWS

### White Stripes break up

After more than 13 years and six studio albums, the White Stripes are hanging it up. The announcement, which came via the band's website, also included good news: The group plans to roll out an abundance of unreleased White Stripes material through **Jack White's** Third Man Records. "There are drastically different versions of songs, covers and songs that have never been released," says Third Man exec Ben Swank. "Jack is just starting to map out a full plan."



Meg and Jack White

### Bonnaroo turns 10 with Eminem, Arcade Fire

Bonnaroo is celebrating its 10th anniversary this summer with help from **Eminem**, **Arcade Fire**, **Lil Wayne**, the **Black Keys**, **Robert Plant** and many more. Returning to the 85,000-capacity event –



Jim James

which kicks off June 9th on a 700-acre farm in Manchester, Tennessee – are five-time vets **My Morning Jacket**. "We didn't play for two years, and I felt like I was missing Easter or Christmas," says Jacket guitarist **Carl Broemel**, adding that their 2008 after-hours blowout in pouring rain was a band favorite. "When the universe decides to make your show great for you, it's way cooler."

### Metallica plot secret 'recording project'

Fresh off the road from a two-year tour, Metallica are hitting the studio in May for a whirlwind two-week session. "It's more a recording project than a bona fide Metallica album," says guitarist **Kirk Hammett**. "Whether or not we can pull it off in just two weeks remains to be seen."

### Soundgarden prep first studio disc since '96

After re-forming for a handful of shows last year, Soundgarden are writing material for their first studio album since 1996. "We're jamming and writing," says guitarist **Kim Thayil**. "Some songs have working titles. I would say we'll definitely be recording in the spring."



Thayil



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# THINK YOU KNOW TYSON?

**YOU MAY BE  
SURPRISED  
TO LEARN  
THE  
TRUTH.**

## **HE'S GIVEN UP MEAT**

He has made many changes in his life, including his diet. For almost two years he's been a vegan, giving up all animal products.

## **HE'S INTROSPECTIVE WHEN SINGING IN THE SHOWER**

From rock to R&B, Tyson covers all genres when belting out tunes in the shower. "I like R&B, but I got everybody in there," says Tyson. "A particular song that touches my heart, boom, it touches you, makes you think about people. I learned a long time ago that regardless of nationality, music doesn't belong to anybody."

## **HE'S CONCERNED ABOUT NUCLEAR WARFARE**

Tyson on his biggest fear, "I'm not scared of anything, but I'm concerned about nuclear catastrophe and that the public is not as educated as they should be about nuclear war."

## **HE COUNTS SURVIVAL AS HIS BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT**

"Not giving up on life. I'm a born loser. I was born to lose in this world, and I didn't give up."

## **HIS MOST PRIZED POSSESSION: HIS KIDS**

"They make me conscious and aware of what it means to become a responsible adult."

## **HIS FIRST FIGHT WAS OVER A BIRD**

Tyson recounts his first fight, "I was nine or ten-years-old, and I have 200 birds. I showed the birds to people who I thought were my friends, and they got a bunch of guys to come snatch my birds!" One guy said, 'you want it?' There was blood on my face, and I tried to fight him. I was scared to death. I didn't really beat him up, but I hit him more than he hit me so I thought I won. Everybody else thought I won. That was the beginning of my fighting life."

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## ON THE ROAD

# The Decemberists Warm Up Chicago With Folk-Rock Anthems

Portland, Oregon, crew celebrates Number One record with killer show

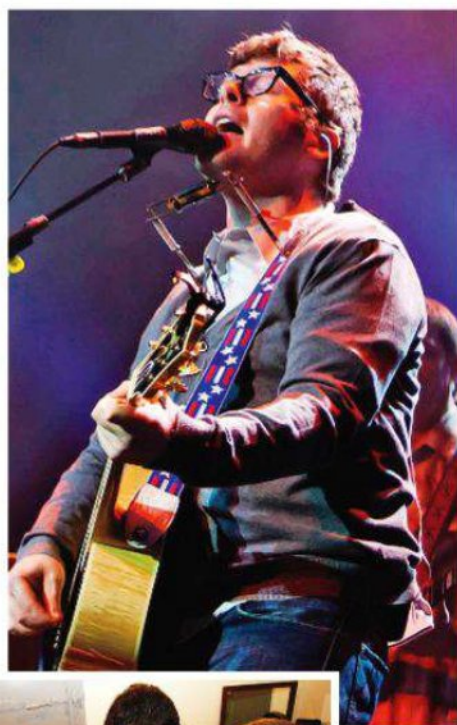
THREE DAYS AFTER CHICAGO got hit with its biggest blizzard since 1967, the Decemberists are backstage at the 94-year-old Riviera Theatre, huddled around an electric radiator. "It's like a campfire," says organist Jenny

**The Decemberists**  
Riviera Theatre, Chicago,  
February 4th

Conlee, cranking up the heat, while frontman Colin Meloy rubs his hands together. Bassist Nate Query removes his boots and curls his feet underneath him: "I'm like a chicken sitting on her eggs!"

The Portland, Oregon, crew may have picked a bad season to hit the road: Meloy caught the flu after the band's sold-out three-night run at New York's Beacon Theatre in January, and a February gig in Detroit was canceled because of a snowstorm – "it's kind of like Book of Job shit," the group's manager says. But there's also been great news: In January, the Decemberists scored their first Number One, when their folksy sixth disc, *The King Is Dead*, debuted atop the *Billboard* 200.

*King* marks a departure from the Decemberists' previous MO: Meloy ditched his trademark epic song cycles for tighter, poppier tunes based on traditional American music. "Any time there was a verse or measure that didn't absolutely need to be there, we cut it," he says. Meloy got the idea for the disc two years ago, when the Decemberists played the Newport Folk Festival with Pete Seeger. "Being there made me remember that you can be a lefty and still be patriotic," says the singer, picking at catered mashed



**WINTERLONG** Meloy onstage in Chicago (top). Conlee, Meloy and Query backstage.

potatoes in the band's dressing room. "There's something about reconnecting with what it means to be an American. It was powerful."

Pre-show, the band members sip PBR and Côtes du Rhône and debate the merits of high-end coffee makers. "Is our tedium scaring you away yet?" asks a cardigan-and-jeans-clad Meloy as he sifts through a rack of even more cardigans, trying to select his stage sweater. "This

**"You can be a lefty and still be patriotic," Meloy says backstage.**

is like a *Portlandia* episode," jokes Query. "It's right out of [the book] *Stuff White People Like*. There's lots to make fun of."

After Conlee leads the band in a Wiccan prayer about "a new spring sprouting forth after the winter solstice" ("I just go online to find it," she says. "Or I make up a bunch of crap"), the Decemberists take the stage. "This weather does funny things to our delicate acoustic instruments, and by instruments I mean our fingers and toes," Meloy

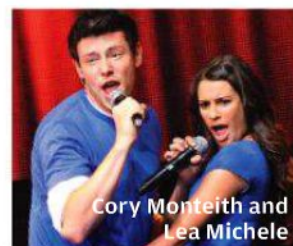
says, before kicking into tunes including the cheerily apocalyptic *King* cut "Calamity Song." The set spans the group's career, from faithful versions of early tunes ("The Mariner's Revenge Song") to countrified new tracks, which feature harmonica, pedal steel riffs and fiddle solos by Nickel Creek's Sara Watkins. During the 2003 folkstomp "The Chimbley Sweep," Meloy thrusts his acoustic guitar into the audience, offering free strums, and the group sinks to the floor, "Shout"-style, before banging out the song's frenzied final chorus.

Before they tear into a pair of encore tunes – including a solo Meloy cover of Joni Mitchell's "A Case of You" ("Someone requested it on Twitter," he says) – the Decemberists, minus Conlee, dive into the crowd, surfing several rows back. Everyone is deposited gently onstage – except multi-instrumentalist Chris Funk, who lands with a belly-flop. "I feel bad for the people who have to carry me," says Meloy after the show. Adds Query, "Our fans aren't the strongest. It's not like we're at a Slayer show." **NICOLE FREHSÉE**

## IN THE NEWS

### 'Glee' crew hits the road

The second *Glee* tour will launch May 21st in Las Vegas, hitting 16 cities and featuring 13 cast members. The set list and the stage design are still being worked out, but the shows will include both solo and group performances and will lean heavily toward songs

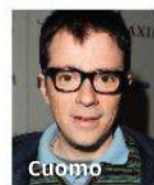


from Season Two ("Empire State of Mind," "Toxic"), along with the ensemble's version of "Don't Stop Believin'" from Season One. "Knowing [*Glee* creator] **Ryan Murphy**, it'll be a supesize version of the last tour," says **Adam Anders**, the show's music producer. "It'll be bigger and better. I can only imagine how loud the audience is going to be this time." The next *Glee* CD, *Volume 5*, hits shelves on March 8th.

### Elton John plots autobiographical musical

"Obviously, it's not going to be your normal, run-of-the-mill film," John said recently about the autobiographical big-screen musical he's prepping. "My life's been so surreal." John adds that *Moulin Rouge!* – in which **Ewan McGregor** memorably covered his tune "Your Song" – is a key influence. **Billy Elliot** playwright **Lee Hall** has already penned the screenplay, but no details about when production will begin have been announced.

### Rivers Cuomo preps 'Pinkerton' book



The **Weezer** frontman has collected diary entries, e-mails, photos and school papers from his time at Harvard in the mid-1990s for *The Pinkerton Diaries*, which hits stores later this year. (This spring, Cuomo will also release the third disc in his *Alone* demos series, which will center on *Pinkerton*-era outtakes.) "I would say that 99 percent of what I wrote about on *Pinkerton* was actually happening in my life," says Cuomo. "It was wonderful as an artist to have all that time to myself to think."



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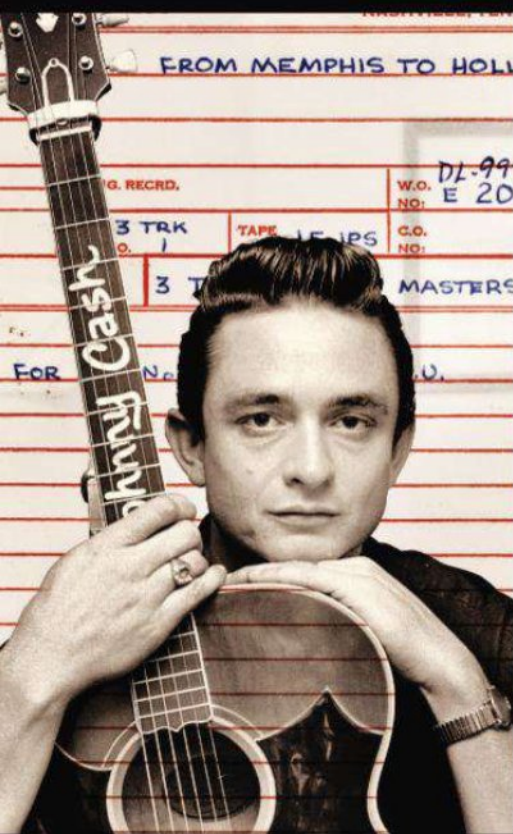
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## Ask Dr. OZZY

**Q** My husband and I have developed such a paralyzing fear of bedbugs that we've basically become prisoners in our own home. How can we get over our paranoia?

—Tara, New York

**A** I've never had a problem with bedbugs – probably 'cause they take one sip of my blood and drop dead from all the toxic shit in there. But I understand your concern: No one wants to wake up with red bite marks on their ball sack. Just bear in mind that bedbugs aren't the worst thing in the world. I'm about to go to South America, and I'm told they have these "kissing spiders": They crawl onto your face, squat over your lips, secrete an anesthetic, suck out the blood and take a dump. Meanwhile, the spider crap contains a kind of bacteria that literally eats your heart out. I'm so freaked out about it, I'm probably gonna spend the whole tour sleeping in a sealed Ziploc fucking bag.

**Q** I've been taking a lot of LSD with my buddies. Should we be worried about long-term effects?

—Colin, California

**A** In my experience, LSD is a great time until it isn't. One minute you're running down Miami Beach

with a foam finger on your head, the next you're sticking a gun in your best friend's face. I still get the after-effects of LSD to this day: I call them my "wobblers." In a flash, every little problem freaks me out and becomes the end of the world. Seriously, man, be careful. If you keep taking that shit, it's gonna bite you on the balls.

**Q** I have a fetish that's surprisingly common. I want my girlfriend to put me in a diaper. I'm terrified to ask her about this. What would you do?

—Jason, Florida

**A** This one's a bit far out even for Dr. Ozzy. Having said that, I had the opposite problem from you in my drinking days: Sharon was the one who'd tell me to get some diapers, 'cause I used to piss in the bed so often. I also used to shit my pants on a fairly regular basis, which ain't very fucking nice. I suppose if you start doing the same thing, your girlfriend might make the same suggestion, saving you the whole "I want to be a big baby" conversation.

If you want Dr. Ozzy's advice about health, sex and family matters, go to [rollingstone.com/drozzzy](http://rollingstone.com/drozzzy).

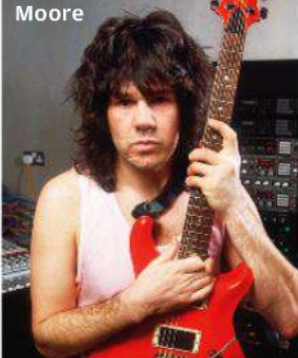
## TRIBUTE

### Gary Moore, Thin Lizzy Guitarist

Metallica's Kirk Hammett remembers one of his top guitar heroes

**G**ARY MOORE BLEW ME AWAY THE first time I heard him – it was like hearing Jimi Hendrix or Stevie Ray Vaughan. It was 1979, and the single "Waiting for an Alibi" came on a college radio station – I instantly knew Thin Lizzy had a different guitar player. (Gary was in an early lineup and had come back. Even though he didn't play on Thin Lizzy's biggest hits, he influenced a generation of guitarists.) His approach embodied everything that I was trying to do. His phrasing was very blues-based – he played long, sustained notes coupled with really superfast picked notes. He even in-

fluenced me visually: Every time I saw a picture of him playing a solo, the expression on his face conveyed that he was feeling it deep.



I don't know why he wasn't more popular in America – he played with George Harrison and B.B. King, and they saw him as a peer. I finally met him in a German hotel a year or so ago. I got into the elevator on the fifth floor, and in comes Gary Moore. I just couldn't believe it. I was a little intimidated, because I heard that he had been mad

at contemporary guitar players for ripping him off. He couldn't have been more gracious to me, though.



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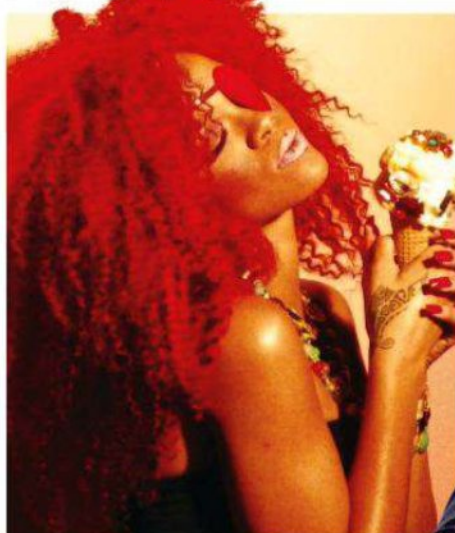
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# HOT LIST

## 1 FOO FIGHTERS "Rope"

Hanging out with John Paul Jones and Josh Homme must have reminded Dave Grohl of his true purpose on this planet: making this hairy-testicled, devil-dicked, atomic beast of a single. May the souls of Bonham, Moon and J. Robert Oppenheimer continue to light his path.

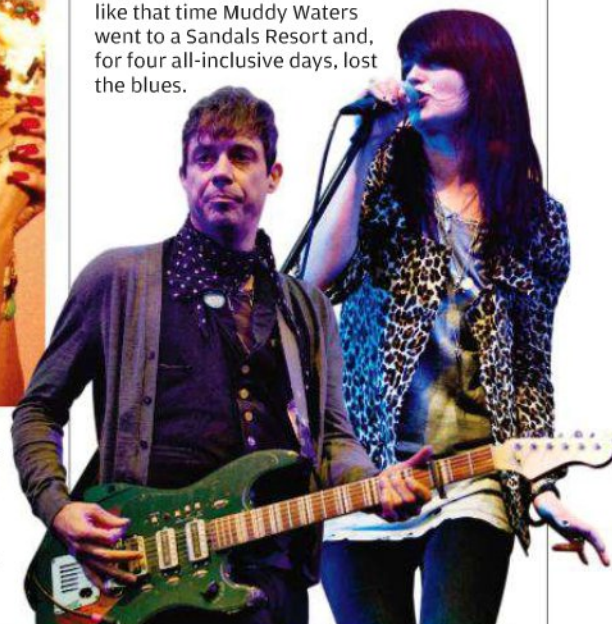


## 2 RIHANNA "S&M" video

In this clip for her most Britneyed-out song ever, Ri-Ri ties herself up in pink ropes and writhes around the floor while she pouts at the camera. Then she binds a journalist to a bed and whips him. (Weirdly, this happened while we were reporting on Goldman Sachs' role in the financial crisis.)

## 3 THE KILLS "Satellite"

The first new single from the other great Alison Mosshart-fronted band - the one without Jack White - adds a hint of reggae to the Kills' noirish doom blues. It's like that time Muddy Waters went to a Sandals Resort and, for four all-inclusive days, lost the blues.



## 4 THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS "Moves" video

All indie bands have super-boring stories: Wow, you met in grad school? But in this trailer for a fake biopic, the New Porns reinvent themselves as depraved, gun-toting megalomaniacs. Best pornographic video ever!



## 5 JAMES BLAKE

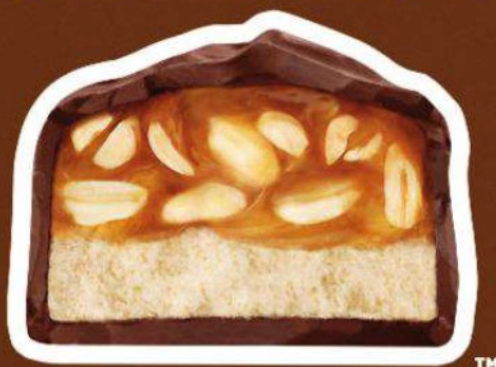
James Blake  
This Brit sensation's debut LP is all slow-mo broken beats, strangely soulful vocals and alien soundscapes. It's total baby-making music - that is, if you're trying to make a baby with E.T. (E.T. bone home!).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JENA ARDELL/"L.A. WEEKLY"; KIRSTY UMBACK/CORBIS; 2: CHIAKI NOZU/WIREIMAGE; NO CREDIT, 2





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**SNICKERS**

**SATISFIES**



# Conor Oberst

**The Bright Eyes leader drops knowledge on Rasta philosophy and getting superhigh at Disneyland** By Brian Hiatt

**C**ONOR OBERST IS NO LONGER LIVING LIKE a nomad – after a couple of years of endless road trips, he's now semisetttled, splitting his time between New York and his native Omaha, Nebraska. But he's as restless as ever: With its electronic flourishes and pop hooks, his seventh Bright Eyes album, *The People's Key*, veers sharply away from the comfy Americana of his last few releases – and gets seriously weird with spoken-word bits by a biker pal who thinks there were reptilian aliens in the Garden of Eden. "It's always just a matter of trying to stay interested in what we're doing," says Oberst – who has also retreated from his 2009 pronouncement that this would be the final Bright Eyes album: "I'm definitely not making it official."

**Is the lyric "I do my best to sleep through the caterwaul/The classicists, the posturing avant-garde" about finding it hard to relate to the current state of music?**

I find it hard to relate to everything, music included. The older I get, the more I feel like I must be in the minority as far as how I think about the world. The people who make the most noise are people I don't relate to at all. There's obviously like-minded people out there, but they're harder to find.

**Can you really relate to the stuff your mystic biker friend says on your record?**

I like that fine line between too far gone and completely genius. When he talks about how universes stay in balance, that's as good an explanation as accepted established religions.

**Why did you abandon the rootsiness of your past couple of albums?**

I got kind of worn out on it. I find the idea of genre repulsive as a person who just wants to make music and explore and do the most inspired things I can. I think about satellite radio, where

every station is like this superspecific thing, and I don't know why you'd want to listen to the same idea over and over again.

**What about Pandora, where you can listen all day to songs that sound like some other song?**

Yeah, it's like an algorithm or whatever. Isn't that just really sad?

**Where do all the references to Rastafarianism on this album come from?**

Well, I definitely like listening to reggae – one artist I got turned on to recently is this woman Hortense Ellis, and I love Jimmy Cliff and Burning Spear – but I think that so much of what they think about is relevant to the broader climate that we are in right now.

**It's hard to argue with their choice of sacrament.**

Yeah [laughs]. Exactly. And just the idea of oneness and the fact that we need each other and the power of music and the power of community.

**How about actually playing reggae?**

Sometimes we do parody versions of our songs in practice with reggae beats for our own entertainment, but no. There have been bands that have incorporated those rhythms and musical motifs into their music successfully – the Clash, obviously, even the Police – but that's not something that I'm really comfortable doing [laughs].

**The song "Beginner's Mind" obviously refers to Buddhism.**

That song is actually sort of dedicated to my friend Jim James – it's a tribute to his spirit. He got into some of that [Buddhist] stuff, and we would talk about it a lot, just the idea that every time you go into an artistic endeavor, you need to try to start from zero again and throw out the things you've learned and your preconceptions and start new.

**In one song, you seem to be singing about the Haunted Mansion at Disneyland. Are you a big fan?**

I like Disneyland – I actually went there one time with Jenny Lewis and [the Postal Service's] Jimmy Tamborello. That remains one of my fondest memories.

**Were you guys superhigh or something?**

Yeah [laughs]. There were definitely some moments of freaking out.





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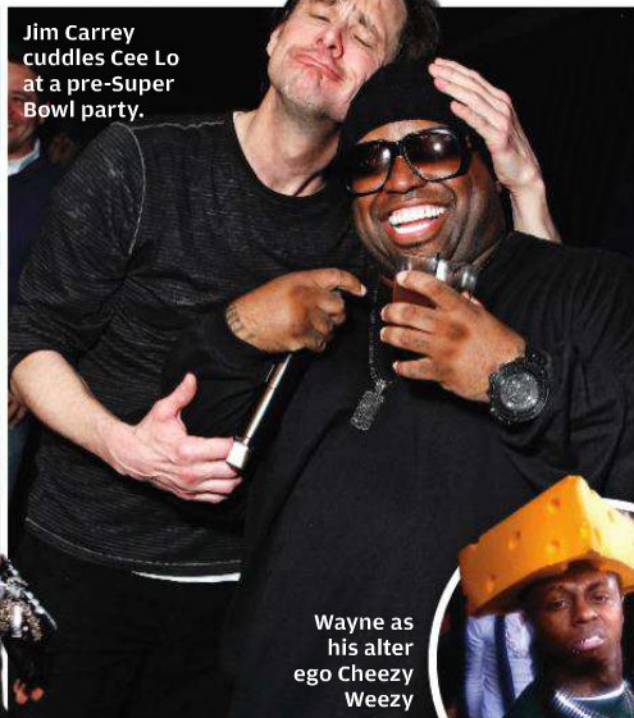
"I just threw some kazoo on this bitch!"—Kanye West, on Twitter

# Random Notes



Ke\$ha pops a squat, calls an audible on her outfit.

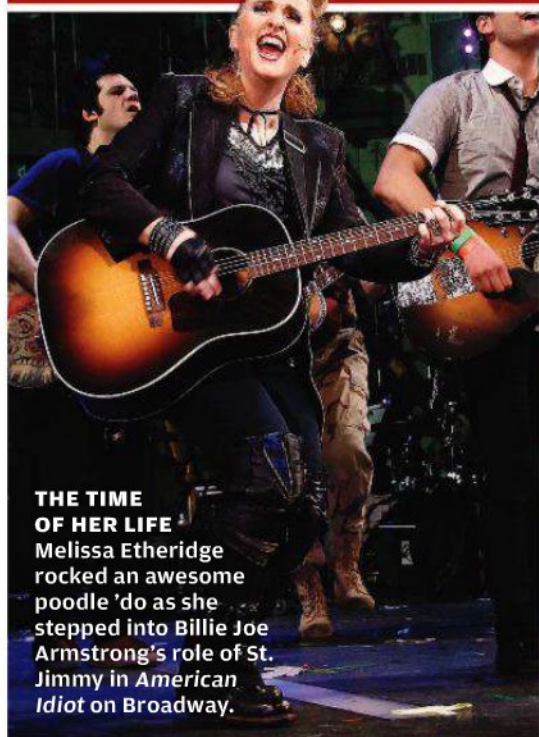
Jim Carrey cuddles Cee Lo at a pre-Super Bowl party.



Wayne as his alter ego Cheezy Weezy

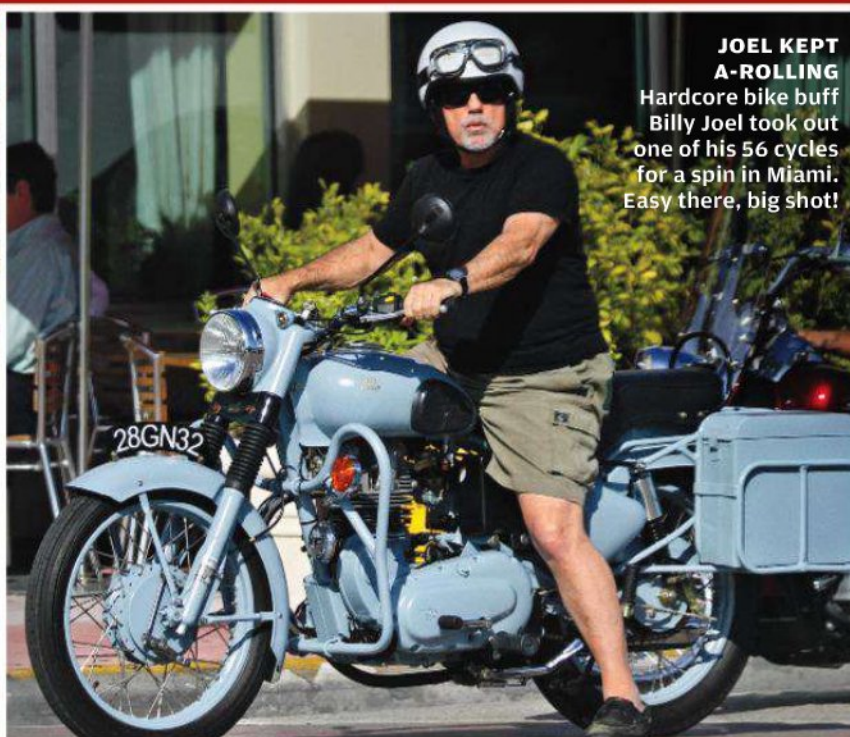
## Super Bowl Fun Day

Xtina botched the anthem in front of a billion people, and the Peas' *Tron*-themed halftime show was a long wardrobe malfunction, but others aced their Super Bowl duties! Steelers fan Ke\$ha brandished a bratwurst launcher at a gig, and Lil Wayne summed up the game with his Packers ode, "Green and Yellow": "We shittin' on these fools/No bathroom."



### THE TIME OF HER LIFE

Melissa Etheridge rocked an awesome poodle 'do as she stepped into Billie Joe Armstrong's role of St. Jimmy in *American Idiot* on Broadway.



### JOEL KEPT A-ROLLING

Hardcore bike buff Billy Joel took out one of his 56 cycles for a spin in Miami. Easy there, big shot!

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC; SARA JAYE WEISS/STARTRAKS PHOTO.COM; COURTESY OF MACK MAINE; SPLASH NEWS; JOSEPH MARZULLO/WENN.COM





**G-STRING UNIT**  
In a heartwarming cross-generational exchange at the Playboy Mansion, Hugh Hefner schooled 50 Cent on the finer points of Pimpology.



**PINK ABOUT TO POP**  
Preggers Pink (she's due this spring) rocked some spandex for a stroll with her punk husband, Carey Hart.

## Baggin' It

Sometimes assistants get the flu: Justin Timberlake went shopping for his Super Bowl party, where he treated guests to his signature "SexyBack Ribs." Meanwhile, a dapper Elvis Costello hit Vancouver's finest department stores.



T-Snake protects his secret ingredients.



Newly buff Rubin counsels Kravitz on proper caloric intake in Malibu.

## Enter Sandmen

Rockers continue to deny winter's existence: Kirk Hammett rode the lightning in Hawaii, while Lenny Kravitz sought wisdom from Rick Rubin, and Jack Johnson took the mellowest jog ever.



Hasselhoff, eat your heart out: Johnson in Oahu.



Hammett tames tsunami-size waves in Hawaii.



Costello scoops up this year's models.



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DO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK & ROLL STAR?

# CHOOSE THE COVER OF Rolling Stone

One of these 16 unsigned artists  
will be on our cover this summer.  
**YOU PICK THE WINNER**

## How It Works

We've picked the 16 bands featured over the next few pages to compete in ROLLING STONE's **DO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK & ROLL STAR?** contest. The winner will appear on our cover in August and will receive a recording contract from Atlantic Records. But first, they'll have to jump a few hurdles. Stage one: Go to [rollingstone.com/choosethecover](http://rollingstone.com/choosethecover) to listen to tracks from each band and pick your favorites.

The eight who make the cut will go into the studio with a major producer. On March 16th, we'll open up the second round of voting. The four survivors will play a live showcase in front of editors and music executives and fight for a place in the finals: onstage at the Bonnaroo festival in June. Welcome to the jungle. May the best band win!

Minnesota  
rapper  
Mod Sun





Clay and Chance

FROM TOP: JOSH FRAMER; SANDY CARSON; CHRISTINA CALDAROL



Eric Larson, Lauren Langner-Larson and Rachel Fuhrer (from left)

## Ume

Ferocious Texas rockers powered by love and distortion

**WHO** Noise-rock trio led by husband-and-wife duo Eric Larson (bass) and Lauren Langner-Larson (guitar, vocals), who met in Houston's grubby punk scene in the mid-Nineties before moving to Austin in 2006.

**SOUND** Distortion-heavy jams (and the whole marriage thing) invite comparisons to Sonic Youth, but Ume do more headbanging and wailing.

**PUNK PROFESSOR** During a band hiatus, Lauren worked toward a philosophy Ph.D. at Penn State, completing all of the requirements except her dissertation. "I taught ethics courses," she says, "but I was always running down to the basement to pick up my guitar."

## Listen & Vote

Hear these bands, get more info and rate your picks at [rollingstone.com/choosethecover](http://rollingstone.com/choosethecover).

# Jamestown Revival

Longtime buddies get together to make mellow gold

**WHO** Jonathan Clay and Zach Chance put their solo projects aside to form this laid-back duo. "We always wrote on each other's records," says Clay, whose songs have gotten play on *The Hills* and *Sons of Anarchy* (Chance's have appeared on *Private Practice*). "Getting together was inevitable."

**SOUND** Mellow folk-rock tunes laced with harmonies and rockabilly guitar.

**BROMANCE** Clay and Chance grew up in Magnolia, Texas (pop. 1,100), and have been inseparable since high school, although Clay's wife has replaced Chance as his roommate. "We've gotten good at avoiding arguments," says Clay.

## The Gallery

Massachusetts-bred quartet dare to be epic

**WHO** Riffed-out rockers originally from tiny Wilbraham, Massachusetts.

**SOUND** Big, shout-along choruses and bluesy guitar breakdowns. Singer Brendan Cooney grew up on Nineties rock, but gravitated toward legends like Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan. "We write with classic song structures in mind," he says. "Not a lot of bands are epic anymore."

**YOUNG-BAND BLUES** The Gallery once hired a manager who booked them on a tour - for no pay. "We survived on merchandise," says Cooney. "But that's where all our opportunities came from."



Dave Mozdzanowski, Brendan and Ryan Cooney, and Shea Brennan

For more content, unfold





Sissy Clemens,  
John Stanesco,  
Jennifer Pepper,  
Klarsfeld, Kyle  
Olson, Connor  
Dosier  
(from left)

# The Americans

Sean Lennon-produced New Yorkers channel Sixties R&B

**WHO** New York crew with a vibrant pop-soul sound and some well-known associates – including Mark Ronson and Sean Lennon.

**SOUND** Harmony-heavy tunes spiked with Motown horns. Bandleader Charlie Klarsfeld loves classic soul: The band's "Try" takes inspiration from Jackie Wilson's "Higher and Higher."

**FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES** Lennon produced "Requiem," from *The White EP*. "I was a little intimidated working with him at first," recalls Klarsfeld, 21, who's the son of fashion photographer Pamela Hanson. "But then we just talked about Prince the whole time."

## Lelia Broussard

Louisiana native covers Bruce, shows off her feisty side

**WHO** Singer-songwriter who's only 21 but has a lifetime of experience – from growing up with a single mom in Louisiana to hitting New York's folk-club circuit at 15.

**SOUND** Sweet-voiced pop, jacked with rock riffs and moody keyboard textures. "I'm a singer-songwriter with an indie-rock background," she says. "I don't want to just be a pretty girl with a guitar."

**COVER GIRL** Broussard's stripped-to-the-melody covers of "Dancing in the Dark" and "Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)" have been viral hits. Of the Springsteen classic, she says, "I wanted to break it down and do it in a different way. It's such a gorgeous song."



## Mod Sun

A Minnesota hippie rapper with hardcore-punk roots

**WHO** Not long ago, Dylan Smith quit his gig drumming for a screamo band and decided to rap. Now he hopes to popularize hip-hop with a new crowd – perhaps his former audience, hardcore-punk fans. "I'm bringing a bunch of people into the genre who wouldn't have touched it before," he says.

**SOUND** Spare loops and soulful rhymes about utopian worlds and "the path less traveled."

**BUD BROTHERS** The MC opened up for the Wu-Tang Clan in Minneapolis – and shared his weed. "I was standing behind them onstage, passing them joints the whole time," he says.



## Go Periscope

Outsize synth pop from two Seattle housemates

**WHO** Joshua Frazier and Florin Merano, both 26, cook up catchy synth pop in a bedroom of their Seattle house. "We rigged up a vocal booth in the closet," says Frazier.

**SOUND** A cross between Soft Cell and Lady Gaga. "We saw Gaga play a high school auditorium a few years ago," recalls Merano. "It was really inspiring."

**BLENDERS** In addition to their original material, GP create DJ mash-ups (one combines Owl City's "On the Wing" with Far East Movement's "Like a G6"). "We look at a song and say, 'How can we exploit the hooks to make it even better?'" Merano says.



Frazier (left), Merano





Josh Spillyards, MacMaster, Judson Spillyards, Whitman Bransford, Ryan Hitt (from left)

# The Romany Rye

Country-rock beauty – OK'd by Kings of Leon

**WHO** Harmony-drenched country-rock collective from Big Bear, California. Matthew Followill (of Kings of Leon) dubbed them a band to watch in 2010.

**SOUND** Snug harmonies over twangy guitars. "I love country songs influenced by gospel and soul," says frontman Luke MacMaster. "Mavis Staples singing 'The Weight' on *The Last Waltz* – that blew my mind."

**BATTLE OF THE BANDS** Followill once invited MacMaster to play in a Strokes-vs.-Kings of Leon baseball game: "The Strokes took baseball so seriously. But we destroyed them, 18-9. I caught the last out."

# Tha Boogie

Funked-out Cali soulsters let their minds roam

**WHO** This trio (from Rancho Cucamonga, California) got a break when primary songwriter Tuko Proby e-mailed R&B star Raphael Saadiq with a link to the band's website, and he promptly hired them to open for him on a 2009 tour. "Next thing you know, we're flying to Boston, picking up our van to drive the East Coast," recalls Proby. "It was ridiculous."

**SOUND** A schizophrenic mix of soul-diva crooning, New Wave synths and scratchy guitars – plus some OutKast-style rhymes. "I get a little something from almost every style," says Proby, who name-checks everyone from Saadiq to Irish alt-rock band Two Door Cinema Club.

**IT'S A LIVING** Though they play rock stars at night, each member of Tha Boogie holds down a day job. Singer Tamika Smith and Proby work in Proby's mom's accounting office. "A client will come in, and my mom will say, 'That's my son. He did a show at the Roxy last night!'" Proby says.



Proby, Jarryd James, Smith (from left)



Eapen, Jon Bradley, Robbie Gullage, Billy Kim, Winter (from left)

# The Steelwells

Big, dreamy pop from SoCal guitar romantics

**WHO** SoCal five-piece whose sun-splashed tunes earned them a residency at L.A.'s hip Silverlake Lounge.

**SOUND** Pretty harmonies meet soaring, church-echo guitars. The band has been compared to the Shins, but frontman Joey Winter says classic singer-songwriters influence him more. "Jeff Buckley taught me how to sing, Elvis Costello taught me how to write," he says.

**TOUGH LOVE** Winter got married at 21 to a co-worker at a local PennySaver, and the marriage lasted five years. "The songs I wrote back then were cryptic, because I didn't want my wife to know that they were about her," he says. ("El Capitan," from the band's 2009 EP, references a sinking ship.) "After the divorce, I felt more free to say what I wanted to say."

**WOODSHEDDING** Steelwells shows have gotten stellar reviews in L.A. – but success didn't come easy. After an underwhelming first gig at a large club, they spent 18 months playing smaller venues four nights a week. These days, "After every show, there is a huge critique," says guitarist Andrew Eapen. Adds Winter, "No one is allowed to get upset about it."



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Currie, Gullen,  
Leot Hanson,  
Sam Corbett  
(from left)

## The Sheepdogs

Throwback guitar majesty from the Great White North

**WHO** Shaggy, classic-rock-loving dudes from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

**SOUND** Hard-charging Seventies-style jams full of harmonized Gibson guitar lines. "I carry a big torch for what Duane Allman and Dickey Betts did in the Allman Brothers," says singer-guitarist Ewan Currie. "And people always compare my vocals to Burton Cummings of the Guess Who."

**HOMETOWN HEROES** "We throw parties at this local senior center," says bassist Ryan Gullen. "Last time, we had a three-foot sheepdog ice sculpture that you could drink Jäger from. It was like a prairie wedding."

**ROAD DOGS** "The distances between cities in Canada is unbelievable," says Currie. The band has already run two vans into the ground. "Winnipeg is eight hours from Saskatoon," Currie adds. "And the next gig will be another eight hours."

## Empires

Raucous Chicago quartet show off their dark side

**WHO** This Chicago band racked up 70,000 downloads of its self-released 2008 debut - then decided to rough up its pop-punk sound. "We're getting rid of the polish," says frontman Sean Van Vleet, 28. "I like that whole Clash/Sex Pistols attitude: 'If you don't like it, we don't give a fuck.'"

**SOUND** Serrated riffs, topped by Van Vleet's passionate wail. "Topics like struggle, hell and sex keep showing up in our songs," says Van Vleet. "If it's dark, it's dark."

**SWEET RIDE** Five days a week, the group squeezes into a subcompact Toyota Echo for the 20-mile commute to its rehearsal space. "It's extremely modest, so it represents the band pretty well," says Van Vleet.



Tom Conrad,  
Ryan Luciani,  
Van Vleet,  
Max Steger  
(from left)



## Muffy

Atlanta scenester sings, raps, seeks inner peace

**WHO** Versatile singer-MC who made her name performing in Atlanta's diversely populated clubs. "You have hipsters drinking PBR and black socialites popping bottles," says Muffy (real name Andrella Muffy Gainer). "Then there's the gay scene - they love music. It's a mixing pot."

**SOUND** Intense electro-pop jams on which Muffy leaps from persona to persona like Nicki Minaj.

**ZEN DIVA** "My favorite way to relax is meditation in my closet," says Muffy, who is signed with Young Jeezy's former manager. "I'll go in anybody's closet and sit in there and meditate."

**SHIT JOB** Muffy is still bound to her day job, scooping poop at a dog kennel. "I like animals," she says. "But sometimes it's kind of gross."

**Listen  
&Vote**

Hear these bands, get more info and rate your picks at [rollingstone.com/choosethecover](http://rollingstone.com/choosethecover).









## Skyler Stonestreet

L.A. lady lights up TV with sweet, sincere pop

**WHO** Singer and pianist whose tunes have been featured on *The Hills*, *One Tree Hill* and *Laguna Beach*. The Las Vegas native comes off as sweetly sincere both off the mic and on - she even calls her cover of Cee Lo Green's "Fuck You" a "kinder, gentler version."

**SOUND** Flirty pop full of bells, finger snaps and breathy vocals.

**SWEET BABY SKYLER** Stonestreet was heavily influenced by the singer-songwriter records her mother used to play around the house. In 2008, she saw her idol, James Taylor, at L.A.'s Greek Theatre. "I was in the last row with the worst seats, but I was singing every song," says Stonestreet. "I even teared up."

**CONTRIBUTORS** David Browne, Patrick Doyle, Nicole Frehsée, Will Hermes and Evan Serpick

# Fictionist

Mellow Utah guys get their Pink Floyd on

**WHO** Laid-back space-rock quintet whose founding members met while studying jazz at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. Yes, they're all Mormon, but they try to keep overt religious references out of their songs. "Music is an area in life where there aren't religious things and secular things that separate us," says singer-bassist Stuart Maxfield. "Everybody can go to a concert and enjoy it."

**SOUND** A blend of psychedelia - heavy on the guitar effects - and peppy indie rock. "Pink Floyd is a big influence for us, that atmospheric rock," says Maxfield. "And Arcade Fire never cease to amaze me."

**THE BENEFITS OF PROHIBITION** Maxfield says that living in Provo, a virtually dry town, actually makes the music scene better. "The only way promoters make money is to book bands with regional followings and promote really hard," he says. "Bands work hard too, because there's no money coming from alcohol sales."



Robbie Connolly, Aaron Anderson, Maxfield, Jacob Jones, Brandon Kitterman (from left)



## Listen & Vote

Hear these bands, get more info and rate your picks at [rollingstone.com/choosethecover](http://rollingstone.com/choosethecover).

Mikel Van Kranenburg, Matt DePauw, Hawley, Fotinakes, Rico Rodriguez (from left)

## PK

Scrappy quintet ditch college for shot at pop-punk glory

**WHO** This Tempton, California, band broke up after high school but restarted when the members dropped out of college two years later. "We realized real life sucks and got back together," says guitarist Nick Fotinakes.

**SOUND** Amped-up pop in the mold of the Killers, with vocals that sound like a Prozac'ed Robert Smith.

**SLOW TEMPO** The band's debut, *Into the Roaring*, took a while to record. "We had to go in spurts, because we were broke," says singer Travis Hawley. "We'd work our asses off, record in L.A., then come back to save money to go back."



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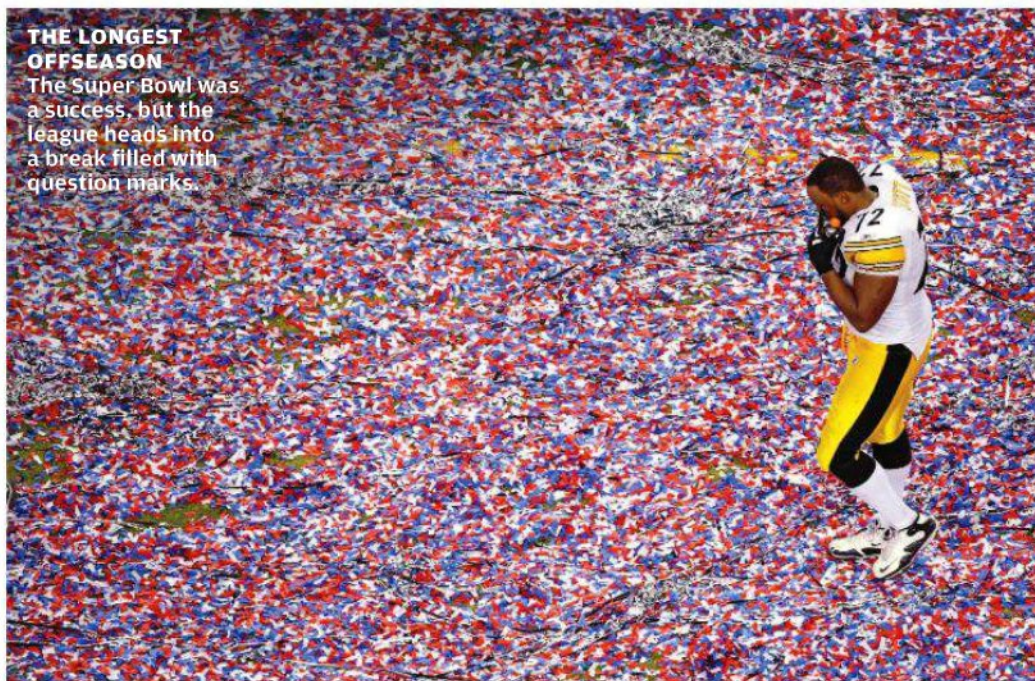
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## THE LONGEST OFFSEASON

The Super Bowl was a success, but the league heads into a break filled with question marks.



# Is the NFL's Party Over?

The league faces a player lockout and lawsuits over the rising tide of injuries that put the future of the game at stake **By Paul Solotaroff**

**G**IVEN THE FESTIVAL of blood that was the 2010 National Football League season, the Super Bowl that capped it was as pleasurable a finish as anyone had a right to expect. The game, pitting two of the sport's class-act outfits who built, rather than bought, their way to power, was a spitfire air show from the opening kick, and came down, as it often does, to which quarterback cashed his final drive. There was beauty, savagery and even a take-home moral: The prince, Aaron Rodgers, outplayed the beast, Ben Roethlisberger, and who, in the age of the \$65 million musical, doesn't like a storybook ending?

Naturally, the game cleaned up at the bank. It was the most-watched program in the history of television, obliterating last year's all-time mark, and concluded a season in which the NFL crushed everything on the tube. Forget that the league was also setting benchmarks for brain damage inflicted and bones shattered; the fans certainly didn't avert their gaze while soaking in the eyeball-peeling violence. Football has never been sexier to sponsors and fans, or more crucial to the

networks that show it. But this being America, that means it's time for the league to pack up its toys and leave. The collective-bargaining agreement between owners and players is set to expire on March 4th, and the holy war of greed that unfolds this spring will be gorier than the regular season. The owners are threatening to lock out the players, setting the stage for a public battle over \$9 billion in annual revenues while home viewers fend off foreclosure. The two sides are about to unleash mayhem on a pastime that is already under assault. At the very height of fortune, the league has begun to dig its grave, a death wish that goes down to its roots.

The greatest threat to football is its own brutality. A generation ago, a defensive end weighed 230 pounds. Now he's 300, runs like a rhino and leads with the crown of his helmet. The game has morphed from a contact sport to a freak show of front-end crashes, and in recent seasons there has been a drumbeat of stories about young ex-players with pre-dementia or veterans found dead by violent means, presenting the brains of punch-

drunk boxers. Then came 2010, the Year of the Monster Kill-Shot. Star after star was laid out cold, flattened by hits above the neck or pile-driven into the turf: 11 concussions in a single weekend and 154 over the course of the season, a jump of 34 percent in two years. So, too, the casualty rate in general: 350 players had their seasons ended early, landing on injured-reserve. That's almost


**Even at the height of fortune, the game has a death wish that goes down to its roots.**

double the number from '06, and it goes up every year.

The league, which for decades had denied a link between concussions and chronic brain damage, finally stepped in and began to fine defenders for helmet-to-helmet hits last fall. As sanctions go, this had all the effect of banning Glock sales in Phoenix. There were more concussions after the edict than before it, and play-

ers around the league openly mocked new rules aimed at keeping concussed athletes off the field. But players have always walked a groggy line between masochism and machismo. Thirty years ago, there was a drill they used to run in every training camp. You'd lie on the turf, facedown in full uniform, while teammates grabbed your ankles and spun you in circles. Then they'd roll a football around and make you chase it, though you were dizzy to the point of passing out. After enough of this, you'd get so you could track the ball, even recover it, while confused and unwell. In this way, they taught you one of the game's core skills: to play through a mild concussion.

However: Given the mounting carnage and its current and future toll – league retirees are five to 19 times likelier to develop dementia than the rest of the population – maybe the two sides can talk about violence while they smack each other sideways in labor talks. Concussions are up in all the sport's pipelines, the college, high school and travel-team leagues, and expect the number of parents who bar kids from playing to spike significantly. Then there's the rear-guard assault brewing: big-money class-action lawsuits. There are at least two groups of plaintiffs prepping to sue the NFL for degenerative brain disorders, and the potential damages are incalculable. Up next on the litigation docket are the wives and children of those vets. When a man's mind fails him and he loses interest, say, in sex, his spouse can sue for "loss of consortium" – even, or maybe especially, if her name is Deanna Favre.

For the sake of its health, then – to say nothing of its players' – the game better return from its tense hiatus with a set of major changes in mind. Requirements to tackle from the navel down; four-game suspensions for head-hunting; the solutions are out there if the will exists. If not, the NFL can always grab its ankles and spin. It may help when the blows come raining down. 



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# WHY ISN'T WALL STREET IN JAIL?

Financial crooks brought down the world's economy – but the feds are doing more to protect them than to prosecute them

By **MATT TAIBBI**

**O**VER DRINKS AT A BAR on a dreary, snowy night in Washington this past month, a former Senate investigator laughed as he polished off his beer.

"Everything's fucked up, and nobody goes to jail," he said. "That's your whole story right there. Hell, you don't even have to write the rest of it. Just write that."

I put down my notebook. "Just that?"

"That's right," he said, signaling to the waitress for the check. "Everything's fucked up, and nobody goes to jail. You can end the piece right there."

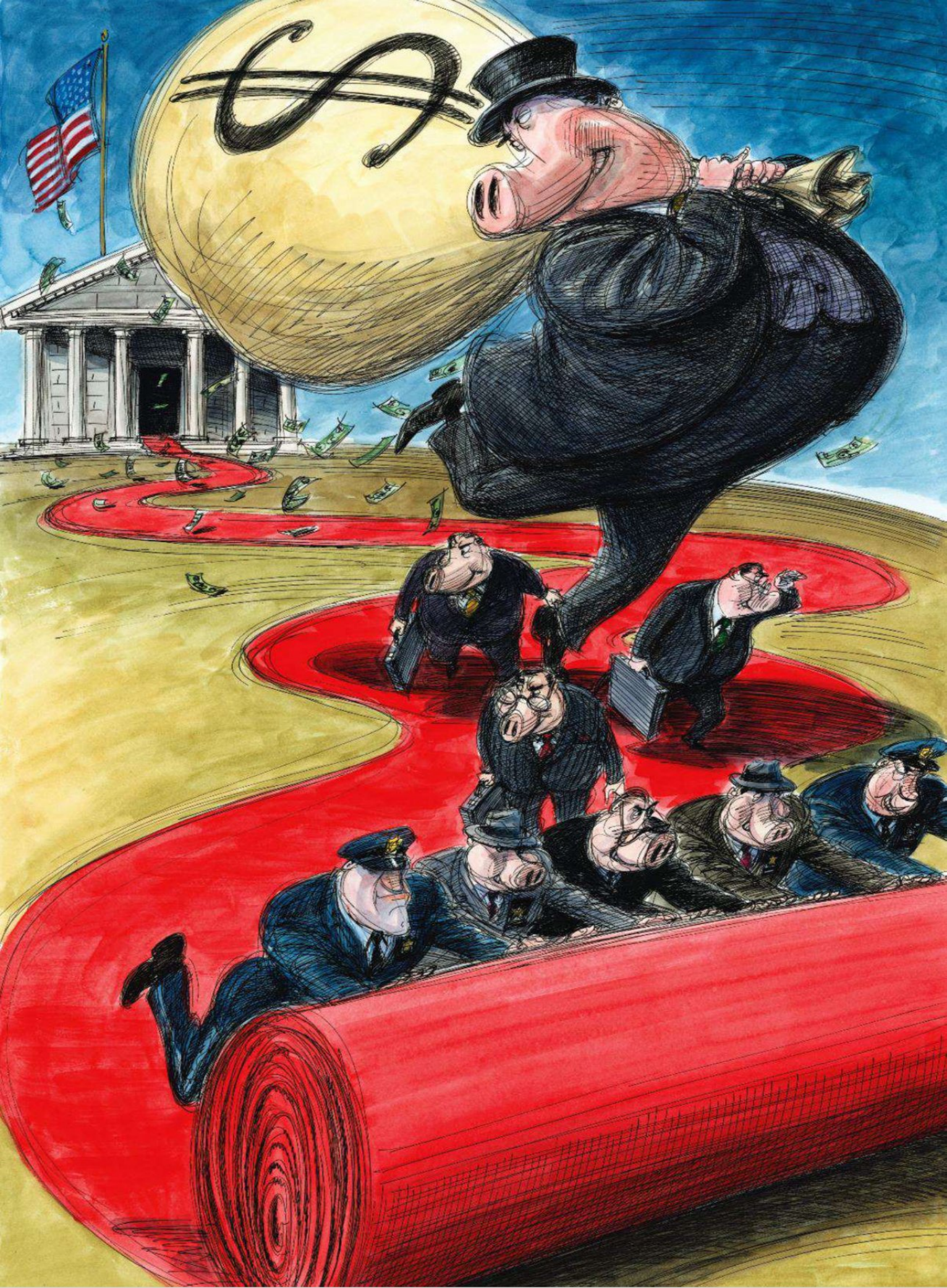
*Nobody goes to jail.* This is the mantra of the financial-crisis era, one that saw virtually every major bank and financial com-

pany on Wall Street embroiled in obscene criminal scandals that impoverished millions and collectively destroyed hundreds of billions, in fact, trillions of dollars of the world's wealth – and nobody went to jail. Nobody, that is, except Bernie Madoff, a flamboyant and pathological celebrity con artist, whose victims happened to be other rich and famous people.

The rest of them, all of them, got off. Not a single executive who ran the companies that cooked up and cashed in on the phony financial boom – an industrywide scam that involved the mass sale of mismarked, fraudulent mortgage-backed securities – has ever been convicted. Their names by now are familiar to even the most casual Middle American news consumer: companies like AIG, Goldman Sachs, Leh-

man Brothers, JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America and Morgan Stanley. Most of these firms were directly involved in elaborate fraud and theft. Lehman Brothers hid billions in loans from its investors. Bank of America lied about billions in bonuses. Goldman Sachs failed to tell clients how it put together the born-to-lose toxic mortgage deals it was selling. What's more, many of these companies had corporate chieftains whose actions cost investors billions – from AIG derivatives chief Joe Cassano, who assured investors they would not lose even "one dollar" just months before his unit imploded, to the \$263 million in compensation that former Lehman chief Dick "The Gorilla" Fuld conveniently failed to disclose. Yet not one of them has faced time behind bars.







Instead, federal regulators and prosecutors have let the banks and finance companies that tried to burn the world economy to the ground get off with carefully orchestrated settlements – white-wash jobs that involve the firms paying pathetically small fines without even being required to admit wrongdoing. To add insult to injury, the people who actually committed the crimes almost never pay the fines themselves; banks caught defrauding their shareholders often use shareholder money to foot the tab of justice. “If the allegations in these settlements are true,” says Jed Rakoff, a federal judge in the Southern District of New York, “it’s management buying its way off cheap, from the pockets of their victims.”

To understand the significance of this, one has to think carefully about the efficacy of fines as a punishment for a defendant pool that includes the richest people on earth – people who simply get their companies to pay their fines for them. Conversely, one has to consider the powerful deterrent to further wrongdoing that the state is missing by not introducing this particular class of people to the experience of incarceration. “You put Lloyd Blankfein in pound-me-in-the-ass prison for one six-month term, and all this bullshit would stop, all over Wall Street,” says a former congressional aide. “That’s all it would take. Just once.”

But that hasn’t happened. Because the entire system set up to monitor and regulate Wall Street is fucked up.

Just ask the people who tried to do the right thing.

**H**ERE’S HOW REGULATION of Wall Street is supposed to work. To begin with, there’s a semigigantic list of public and quasi-public agencies ostensibly keeping their eyes on the economy, a dense alphabet soup of banking, insurance, S&L, securities and commodities regulators like the Federal Reserve, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC), the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), as well as supposedly “self-regulating organizations” like the New York Stock Exchange. All of these outfits, by law, can at least begin the process of catching and investigating financial criminals, though none of them has prosecutorial power.

The major federal agency on the Wall Street beat is the Securities and Exchange Commission. The SEC watches for violations like insider trading, and also deals with so-called “disclosure violations” – i.e.,

making sure that all the financial information that publicly traded companies are required to make public actually jibes with reality. But the SEC doesn’t have prosecutorial power either, so in practice, when it looks like someone needs to go to jail, they refer the case to the Justice Department. And since the vast majority of crimes in the financial services industry take place in Lower Manhattan, cases referred by the SEC often end up in the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. Thus, the two top cops on Wall Street are generally considered to be that U.S. attorney – a job that has been held by thunderous prosecutorial personae like Robert Morgenthau and Rudy Giuliani – and the SEC’s director of enforcement.

The relationship between the SEC and the DOJ is necessarily close, even symbiotic. Since financial crime-fighting requires

matter who’s in office or which party’s in power. To understand how the machinery functions, you have to start back at least a decade ago, as case after case of financial malfeasance was pursued too slowly or not at all, fumbled by a government bureaucracy that too often is on a first-name basis with its targets. Indeed, the shocking pattern of nonenforcement with regard to Wall Street is so deeply ingrained in Washington that it raises a profound and difficult question about the very nature of our society: whether we have created a class of people whose misdeeds are no longer perceived as crimes, almost no matter what those misdeeds are. The SEC and the Justice Department have evolved into a bizarre species of social surgeon serving this nonjailable class, expert not at administering punishment and justice, but at finding and removing criminal responsibility from the bodies of the accused.

The systematic lack of regulation has left even the country’s top regulators frustrated. Lynn Turner, a former chief accountant for the SEC, laughs darkly at the idea that the criminal justice system is broken when it comes to Wall Street. “I think you’ve got a wrong assumption – that we even *have* a law-enforcement agency when it comes to Wall Street,” he says.

In the hierarchy of the SEC, the chief accountant plays a major role in working to pursue misleading and phony financial disclosures. Turner held the post a decade ago, when one of the most significant cases was swallowed up by the SEC bureaucracy. In the late 1990s, the agency had an open-and-shut case against the Rite Aid drugstore chain, which was using diabolical accounting tricks to cook their books. But instead of moving swiftly to crack down on such scams, the SEC shoved the case into the “deal with it later” file. “The Philadelphia office literally did nothing with the case for a year,” Turner recalls. “Very much like the New York office with Madoff.” The Rite Aid case dragged on for years – and by the time it was finished, similar accounting fiascoes at Enron and WorldCom had exploded into a full-blown financial crisis.

The same was true for another SEC case that presaged the Enron disaster. The agency knew that appliance-maker Sunbeam was using the same kind of accounting scams to systematically hide losses from its investors. But in the end, the SEC’s punishment for Sunbeam’s CEO, Al “Chainsaw” Dunlap – widely regarded as one of the biggest assholes in the history of American finance – was a fine of \$500,000. Dunlap’s net worth at the time was an estimated \$100 million. The SEC



## INSIDER INFLUENCE

The SEC didn’t even question Morgan Stanley chief John Mack until it was too late to prosecute him for insider trading.

a high degree of financial expertise – and since the typical drug-and-terrorism-obsessed FBI agent can’t balance his own checkbook, let alone tell a synthetic CDO from a credit default swap – the Justice Department ends up leaning heavily on the SEC’s army of 1,100 number-crunching investigators to make their cases. In theory, it’s a well-oiled, tag-team affair: Billionaire Wall Street Asshole commits fraud, the NYSE catches on and tips off the SEC, the SEC works the case and delivers it to Justice, and Justice perp-walks the Asshole out of Nobu, into a Crown Victoria and off to 36 months of push-ups, license-plate making and Salisbury steak.

That’s the way it’s supposed to work. But a veritable mountain of evidence indicates that when it comes to Wall Street, the justice system not only sucks at punishing financial criminals, it has actually evolved into a highly effective mechanism for *protecting* financial criminals. This institutional reality has absolutely nothing to do with politics or ideology – it takes place no



also barred Dunlap from ever running a public company again – forcing him to retire with a mere \$99.5 million. Dunlap passed the time collecting royalties from his self-congratulatory memoir. Its title: *Mean Business*.

**T**HE PATTERN OF INACTION toward shady deals on Wall Street grew worse and worse after Turner left, with one slam-dunk case after another either languishing for years or disappearing altogether. Perhaps the most notorious example involved Gary Aguirre, an SEC investigator who was literally fired after he questioned the agency's failure to pursue an insider-trading case against John Mack, now the chairman of Morgan Stanley and one of America's most powerful bankers.

Aguirre joined the SEC in September 2004. Two days into his career as a financial investigator, he was asked to look into an insider-trading complaint against a hedge-fund megastar named Art Samberg. One day, with no advance research or discussion, Samberg had suddenly started buying up huge quantities of shares in a firm called Heller Financial. "It was as if Art Samberg woke up one morning and a voice from the heavens told him to start buying Heller," Aguirre recalls. "And he wasn't just buying shares – there were some days when he was trying to buy three times as many shares as were being traded that day." A few weeks later, Heller was bought by General Electric – and Samberg pocketed \$18 million.

After some digging, Aguirre found himself focusing on one suspect as the likely source who had tipped Samberg off: John Mack, a close friend of Samberg's who had just stepped down as president of Morgan Stanley. At the time, Mack had been on Samberg's case to cut him into a deal involving a spinoff of the tech company Lucent – an investment that stood to make Mack a lot of money. "Mack is busting my chops" to give him a piece of the action, Samberg told an employee in an e-mail.

A week later, Mack flew to Switzerland to interview for a top job at Credit Suisse First Boston. Among the investment bank's clients, as it happened, was a firm called Heller Financial. We don't know for sure what Mack learned on his Swiss trip; years later, Mack would claim that he had thrown away his notes about the meetings. But we do know that as soon as Mack returned from the trip, on a Friday, he called up his buddy Samberg. The very next morning, Mack was cut into the Lucent deal – a favor that netted him more than \$10 million. And as soon as the market reopened after the weekend, Samberg

started buying every Heller share in sight, right before it was snapped up by GE – a suspiciously timed move that earned him the equivalent of Derek Jeter's annual salary for just a few minutes of work.

The deal looked like a classic case of insider trading. But in the summer of 2005, when Aguirre told his boss he planned to interview Mack, things started getting weird. His boss told him the case wasn't likely to fly, explaining that Mack had "powerful political connections." (The investment banker had been a fundraising "Ranger" for George Bush in 2004, and would go on to be a key backer of Hillary Clinton in 2008.)

Aguirre also started to feel pressure from Morgan Stanley, which was in the process of trying to rehire Mack as CEO. At

Financial regulators  
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bodies of the accused.

first, Aguirre was contacted by the bank's regulatory liaison, Eric Dinallo, a former top aide to Eliot Spitzer. But it didn't take long for Morgan Stanley to work its way up the SEC chain of command. Within three days, another of the firm's lawyers, Mary Jo White, was on the phone with the SEC's director of enforcement. In a shocking move that was later singled out by Senate investigators, the director actually appeared to reassure White, dismissing the case against Mack as "smoke" rather than "fire." White, incidentally, was herself the former U.S. attorney of the Southern District of New York – one of the top cops on Wall Street.

Pause for a minute to take this in. Aguirre, an SEC foot soldier, is trying to interview a major Wall Street executive – not handcuff the guy or impound his yacht, mind you, just *talk* to him. In the course of doing so, he finds out that his target's firm is being represented not only by Eliot Spitzer's former top aide, but by the former U.S. attorney overseeing Wall Street, who is going four levels over his head to speak directly to the chief of the SEC's enforcement division – not Aguirre's boss, but his boss's boss's boss's boss. Mack him-

self, meanwhile, was being represented by Gary Lynch, a former SEC director of enforcement.

Aguirre didn't stand a chance. A month after he complained to his supervisors that he was being blocked from interviewing Mack, he was summarily fired, without notice. The case against Mack was immediately dropped: all depositions canceled, no further subpoenas issued. "It all happened so fast, I needed a seat belt," recalls Aguirre, who had just received a stellar performance review from his bosses. The SEC eventually paid Aguirre a settlement of \$755,000 for wrongful dismissal.

Rather than going after Mack, the SEC started looking for someone else to blame for tipping off Samberg. (It was, Aguirre quips, "O.J.'s search for the real killers.")

It wasn't until a year later that the agency finally got around to interviewing Mack, who denied any wrongdoing. The four-hour deposition took place on August 1st, 2006 – just days after the five-year statute of limitations on insider trading had expired in the case.

"At best, the picture shows extraordinarily lax enforcement by the SEC," Senate investigators would later conclude. "At worse, the picture is colored with overtones of a possible cover-up."

**E**PISODES LIKE THIS help explain why so many Wall Street executives felt emboldened to push the regulatory envelope during the mid-2000s. Over and over, even the most obvi-

ous cases of fraud and insider dealing got gummed up in the works, and high-ranking executives were almost never prosecuted for their crimes. In 2003, Freddie Mac coughed up \$125 million after it was caught misreporting its earnings by \$5 billion; nobody went to jail. In 2006, Fannie Mae was fined \$400 million, but executives who had overseen phony accounting techniques to jack up their bonuses faced no criminal charges. That same year, AIG paid \$1.6 billion after it was caught in a major accounting scandal that would indirectly lead to its collapse two years later, but no executives at the insurance giant were prosecuted.

All of this behavior set the stage for the crash of 2008, when Wall Street exploded in a raging Dresden of fraud and criminality. Yet the SEC and the Justice Department have shown almost no inclination to prosecute those most responsible for the catastrophe – even though they had insiders from the two firms whose implosions triggered the crisis, Lehman Brothers and AIG, who were more than willing to supply evidence against top executives.

In the case of Lehman Brothers, the SEC had a chance six months before the



crash to move against Dick Fuld, a man recently named the worst CEO of all time by *Portfolio* magazine. A decade before the crash, a Lehman lawyer named Oliver Budde was going through the bank's proxy statements and noticed that it was using a loophole involving Restricted Stock Units to hide tens of millions of dollars of Fuld's compensation. Budde told his bosses that Lehman's use of RSUs was dicey at best, but they blew him off. "We're sorry about your concerns," they told him, "but we're doing it." Disturbed by such shady practices, the lawyer quit the firm in 2006.

Then, only a few months after Budde left Lehman, the SEC changed its rules to force companies to disclose exactly how much compensation in RSUs executives had coming to them. "The SEC was basically like, 'We're sick and tired of you people fucking around - we want a picture of what you're holding,'" Budde says. But instead of coming clean about eight separate RSUs that Fuld had hidden from investors, Lehman filed a proxy statement that was a masterpiece of cynical lawyering. On one page, a chart indicated that Fuld had been awarded \$146 million in RSUs. But two pages later, a note in the fine print essentially stated that the chart did not contain the real number - which, it failed to mention, was actually \$263 million more than the chart indicated. "They fucked around even more than they did before," Budde says. (The law firm that helped craft the fine print, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, would later receive a lucrative federal contract to serve as legal adviser to the TARP bailout.)

Budde decided to come forward. In April 2008, he wrote a detailed memo to the SEC about Lehman's history of hidden stocks. Shortly thereafter, he got a letter back that began, "Dear Sir or Madam." It was an automated e-response.

"They blew me off," Budde says.

Over the course of that summer, Budde tried to contact the SEC several more times, and was ignored each time. Finally, in the fateful week of September 15th, 2008, when Lehman Brothers cracked under the weight of its reckless bets on the subprime market and went into its final death spiral, Budde became seriously concerned. If the government tried to arrange for Lehman to be pawned off on another Wall Street firm, as it had done with Bear Stearns, the U.S. taxpayer might wind up footing the bill for a company with hundreds of millions of dollars in concealed compensation. So Budde again called the SEC, right in the middle of the crisis. "Look," he told regulators. "I gave you huge stuff. You really want to take a look at this."

But the feds once again blew him off. A young staff attorney contacted Budde, who once more provided the SEC with copies of all his memos. He never heard from the agency again.

"This was like a mini-Madoff," Budde says. "They had six solid months of warnings. They could have done something."

Three weeks later, Budde was shocked to see Fuld testifying before the House Government Oversight Committee and whining about how poor he was. "I got no severance, no golden parachute," Fuld moaned. When Rep. Henry Waxman, the committee's chairman, mentioned that he thought Fuld had earned more than \$480 million, Fuld corrected him and said he believed it was only \$310 million.

The true number, Budde calculated, was \$529 million. He contacted a Senate investigator to talk about how Fuld had misled Congress, but he never got any response. Meanwhile, in a demonstration of the government's priorities, the Justice Department is proceeding full force with

a prosecution of retired baseball player Roger Clemens for lying to Congress about getting a shot of steroids in his ass. "At least Roger didn't screw over the world," Budde says, shaking his head.

Fuld has denied any wrongdoing, but his hidden compensation was only a ripple in Lehman's raging tsunami of misdeeds. The investment bank used an absurd accounting trick called "Repo 105" transactions to conceal \$50 billion in loans on the firm's balance sheet. (That's \$50 billion, not million.) But more than a year after the use of the Repo 105s came to light, there have still been no indictments in the affair. While it's possible that charges may yet be filed, there are now rumors that the SEC and the Justice Department may take no action against Lehman. If that's true, and there's no prosecution in a case where there's such overwhelming evidence - and where the company is already dead, meaning it can't dump further losses on investors or taxpayers - then it might be time to assume the game is up. Failing to prosecute Fuld and Lehman would be tantamount to the state marching into Wall Street and waving the green flag on a new stealing season.

**T**HE MOST AMAZING NON-case in the entire crash - the one that truly defies the most basic notion of justice when it comes to Wall Street supervillains - is the one involving AIG and Joe Cassano, the nebbishy Patient Zero of the financial crisis. As chief of AIGFP, the firm's financial products subsidiary, Cassano repeatedly made public statements in 2007 claiming that his portfolio of mortgage derivatives would suffer "no dollar of loss" - an almost comically obvious misrepresentation. "God couldn't manage a \$60 billion real estate portfolio without a

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GETTY IMAGES; KHALIDSHOU; JEFF KOWALSKY/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES; NO CREDIT; 2; APPLE; DIGITALLY ALTERED BY "ROLLING STONE"; AP IMAGES; HERSHEY'S; GIANLUIGI GUERCIA/AP/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY/REUTERS/LANDOV; FOX NEWS

## THREAT ASSESSMENT

### THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE SCARY



**Cock-fighting rooster** stabs, kills California owner.



White House seeks **\$53 billion** for high-speed rail.



Detroit to sell **homes to cops** for \$1,000 down.



**2 Live Crew's** Luther Campbell runs for mayor of Miami.



Bush cancels trip to Geneva over threat of **torture prosecution**.



Study: Wind power now as cheap as **coal**.



Glenn Beck **ratings** fall by 39 percent.



Farrah Fawcett's **swimsuit** donated to Smithsonian.



**Sixty-one percent** of Republicans want faster Afghanistan exit.



**Tahrir Square**



Verizon makes iPhones work in **Wyoming**.



Sarah Palin denied bid to **trademark** "Sarah Palin" after failing to sign "Sarah Palin" on application.



Unemployment **drops** to nine percent.



**Chocolate** better for you than blueberries.







\$33 million, but Judge Jed Rakoff rejected the action as a “facade of enforcement.” So the SEC quintupled the settlement – but it didn’t require either Merrill or Bank of America to admit to wrongdoing. Unlike criminal trials, in which the facts of the crime are put on record for all to see, these Wall Street settlements almost never require the banks to make any factual disclosures, effectively burying the stories forever. “All this is done at the expense not only of the shareholders, but also of the truth,” says Rakoff.

Goldman, Deutsche, Merrill, Lehman, Bank of America . . . who did we leave out? Oh, there’s Citigroup, nailed for hiding some \$40 billion in liabilities from investors. Last July, the SEC settled with Citi for \$75 million. In a rare move, it also fined two Citi executives, former CFO Gary Crittenden and investor-relations chief Arthur Tildesley Jr. Their penalties, combined, came to a whopping \$180,000.

Throughout the entire crisis, in fact, the government has taken exactly one serious swing of the bat against executives from a major bank, charging two guys from Bear Stearns with criminal fraud over a pair of toxic subprime hedge funds that blew up in 2007, destroying the company and robbing investors of \$1.6 billion. Jurors had an e-mail between the defendants admitting that “there is simply no way for us to make money – ever” just three days before assuring investors that “there’s no basis for thinking this is one big disaster.” Yet the case still somehow ended in acquittal – and the Justice Department hasn’t taken any of the big banks to court since.

All of which raises an obvious question: Why the hell not?

Gary Aguirre, the SEC investigator who lost his job when he drew the ire of Morgan Stanley, thinks he knows the answer.

Last year, Aguirre noticed that a conference on financial law enforcement was scheduled to be held at the Hilton in New York on November 12th. The list of attendees included 1,500 or so of the country’s leading lawyers who represent Wall Street, as well as some of the government’s top cops from both the SEC and the Justice Department.

Criminal justice, as it pertains to the Goldmans and Morgan Stanleys of the world, is not adversarial combat, with cops and crooks duking it out in interrogation rooms and courthouses. Instead, it’s a cocktail party between friends and colleagues who from month to month and year to year are constantly switching sides and trading hats. At the Hilton conference, regulators and banker-lawyers rubbed elbows during a series of speeches and panel discussions, away from the

rabble. “They were chummier in that environment,” says Aguirre, who plunked down \$2,200 to attend the conference.

Aguirre saw a lot of familiar faces at the conference, for a simple reason: Many of the SEC regulators he had worked with during his failed attempt to investigate John Mack had made a million-dollar pass through the Revolving Door, going to work for the very same firms they used to police. Aguirre didn’t see Paul Berger, an associate director of enforcement who had rebuffed his attempts to interview Mack – maybe because Berger was tied up at his lucrative new job at Debevoise & Plimpton, the same law firm that Morgan Stanley employed to intervene in the Mack case. But he did see Mary Jo White, the former U.S. attorney, who was still at Debevoise & Plimpton. He also saw Linda Thomsen, the former SEC director of



## WALL STREET’S “GORILLA”

The feds have yet to bring charges against Lehman Brothers and CEO Dick Fuld for hiding \$50 billion in loans from investors.

enforcement who had been so helpful to White. Thomsen had gone on to represent Wall Street as a partner at the prestigious firm of Davis Polk & Wardwell.

Two of the government’s top cops were there as well: Preet Bharara, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Robert Khuzami, the SEC’s current director of enforcement. Bharara had been recommended for his post by Chuck Schumer, Wall Street’s favorite senator. And both he and Khuzami had served with Mary Jo White at the U.S. attorney’s office, before Mary Jo went on to become a partner at Debevoise. What’s more, when Khuzami had served as general counsel for Deutsche Bank, he had been hired by none other than Dick Walker, who had been enforcement director at the SEC when it slow-rolled the pivotal fraud case against Rite Aid.

“It wasn’t just one rotation of the revolving door,” says Aguirre. “It just kept spinning. Every single person had rotated in and out of government and private service.”

The Revolving Door isn’t just a footnote in financial law enforcement; over the past decade, more than a dozen high-ranking SEC officials have gone on to lucrative jobs at Wall Street banks or white-shoe law firms, where partnerships are worth millions. That makes SEC officials like Paul Berger and Linda Thomsen the equivalent of college basketball stars waiting for their first NBA contract. Are you really going to give up a shot at the Knicks or the Lakers just to find out whether a Wall Street big shot like John Mack was guilty of insider trading?

“You take one of these jobs,” says Turner, the former chief accountant for the SEC, “and you’re fit for life.”

Fit – and happy. The banter between the speakers at the New York conference says everything you need to know about the level of chumminess and mutual admiration that exists between these supposed adversaries of the justice system. At one point in the conference, Mary Jo White introduced Bharara, her old pal from the U.S. attorney’s office.

“I want to first say how pleased I am to be here,” Bharara responded. Then, addressing White, he added, “You’ve spawned all of us. It’s almost 11 years ago to the day that Mary Jo White called me and asked me if I would become an assistant U.S. attorney. So thank you, Dr. Frankenstein.”

Next, addressing the crowd of high-priced lawyers from Wall Street, Bharara made an interesting joke. “I also want to take a moment to applaud the entire staff of the SEC for the really amazing things they have done over the past year,” he said. “They’ve done a real service to the country, to the financial community, and not to mention a lot of your law practices.”

*Haw!* The line drew snickers from the conference of millionaire lawyers. But the real fireworks came when Khuzami, the SEC’s director of enforcement, talked about a new “cooperation initiative” the agency had recently unveiled, in which executives are being offered incentives to report fraud they have witnessed or committed. From now on, Khuzami said, when corporate lawyers like the ones he was addressing want to know if their Wall Street clients are going to be charged by the Justice Department before deciding whether to come forward, all they have to do is ask the SEC.

“We are going to try to get those individuals answers,” Khuzami announced, as to “whether or not there is criminal interest in the case – so that defense counsel can have as much information as possible in deciding whether or not to choose to sign up their client.”



Aguirre, listening in the crowd, couldn't believe Khuzami's brazenness. The SEC's enforcement director was saying, in essence, that firms like Goldman Sachs and AIG and Lehman Brothers will henceforth be able to get the SEC to act as a middleman between them and the Justice Department, negotiating fines as a way out of jail time. Khuzami was basically outlining a four-step system for banks and their executives to buy their way out of prison. "First, the SEC and Wall Street player make an agreement on a fine that the player will pay to the SEC," Aguirre says. "Then the Justice Department commits itself to pass, so that the player knows he's 'safe.' Third, the player pays the SEC – and fourth, the player gets a pass from the Justice Department."

When I ask a former federal prosecutor about the propriety of a sitting SEC director of enforcement talking out loud about helping corporate defendants "get answers" regarding the status of their criminal cases, he initially doesn't believe it. Then I send him a transcript of the comment. "I am very, very surprised by Khuzami's statement, which does seem to me to be contrary to past practice – and not a good thing," the former prosecutor says.

Earlier this month, when Sen. Chuck Grassley found out about Khuzami's comments, he sent the SEC a letter noting that the agency's own enforcement manual not only prohibits such "answer getting," it even bars the SEC from giving defendants the Justice Department's phone number. "Should counsel or the individual ask which criminal authorities they should contact," the manual reads, "staff should decline to answer, unless authorized by the relevant criminal authorities." Both the SEC and the Justice Department deny there is anything improper in their new policy of cooperation. "We collaborate with the SEC, but they do not consult with us when they resolve their cases," Assistant Attorney General Lanny Breuer assured Congress in January. "They do that independently."

Around the same time that Breuer was testifying, however, a story broke that prior to the pathetically small settlement of \$75 million that the SEC had arranged with Citigroup, Khuzami had ordered his staff to pursue lighter charges against the megabank's executives. According to a letter that was sent to Sen. Grassley's office, Khuzami had a "secret conversation, without telling the staff, with a prominent defense lawyer who is a good friend" of his and "who was counsel for the company." The unsigned letter, which appears to have come from an SEC investigator on the case, prompted the inspector general to launch an investigation into the charge.

ALL OF THIS PAINTS A DISTURBING picture of a closed and corrupt system, a timeless circle of friends that virtually guarantees a collegial approach to the policing of high finance. Even before the corruption starts, the state is crippled by economic reality: Since law enforcement on Wall Street requires serious intellectual firepower, the banks seize a huge advantage from the start by hiring away the top talent. Budde, the former Lehman lawyer, says it's well known that all the best legal minds go to the big corporate law firms, while the "bottom 20 percent go to the SEC." Which makes it tough for the agency to track devious legal machinations, like the scheme to hide \$263 million of Dick Fuld's compensation.

When Citigroup was nailed for hiding \$40 billion in liabilities from investors, the SEC fined two Citi executives. Their combined penalty: a whopping \$180,000.

"It's such a mismatch, it's not even funny," Budde says.

But even beyond that, the system is skewed by the irrepressible pull of riches and power. If talent rises in the SEC or the Justice Department, it sooner or later jumps ship for those fat NBA contracts. Or, conversely, graduates of the big corporate firms take sabbaticals from their rich lifestyles to slum it in government service for a year or two. Many of those appointments are inevitably hand-picked by lifelong stooges for Wall Street like Chuck Schumer, who has accepted \$14.6 million in campaign contributions from Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and other major players in the finance industry, along with their corporate lawyers.


As for President Obama, what is there to be said? Goldman Sachs was his number-one private campaign contributor. He put a Citigroup executive in charge of his economic transition team, and he just named an executive of JP Morgan Chase, the proud owner of \$7.7 million in Chase stock, his new chief of staff. "The betrayal that this represents by Obama to everybody is just – we're not ready to believe it," says Budde, a classmate of the president

from their Columbia days. "He's really fucking us over like that? Really? That's really a JP Morgan guy, really?"

Which is not to say that the Obama era has meant an end to law enforcement. On the contrary: In the past few years, the administration has allocated massive amounts of federal resources to catching wrongdoers – of a certain type. Last year, the government deported 393,000 people, at a cost of \$5 billion. Since 2007, felony immigration prosecutions along the Mexican border have surged 77 percent; nonfelony prosecutions by 259 percent. In Ohio last month, a single mother was caught lying about where she lived to put her kids into a better school district; the judge in the case tried to sentence her to 10 days in jail for fraud, declaring that letting her go free would "demean the seriousness" of the offenses.

So there you have it. Illegal immigrants: 393,000. Lying moms: one. Bankers: zero. The math makes sense only because the politics are so obvious. You want to win elections, you bang on the jailable class. You build prisons and fill them with people for selling dime bags and stealing CD players. But for stealing a billion dollars? For fraud that puts a million people into foreclosure? Pass. It's not a crime. Prison is too harsh. Get them to say they're sorry, and move on. Oh, wait – let's not even make them say they're sorry. That's too mean; let's just give them a piece of paper with a government stamp on it, officially clearing them of the need to apologize, and make them

pay a fine instead. But don't make them pay it out of their own pockets, and don't ask them to give back the money they stole. In fact, let them profit from their collective crimes, to the tune of a record \$135 billion in pay and benefits last year. What's next? Taxpayer-funded massages for every Wall Street executive guilty of fraud?

The mental stumbling block, for most Americans, is that financial crimes don't feel real; you don't see the culprits waving guns in liquor stores or dragging coeds into bushes. But these frauds are worse than common robberies. They're crimes of intellectual choice, made by people who are already rich and who have every conceivable social advantage, acting on a simple, cynical calculation: Let's steal whatever we can, then dare the victims to find the juice to reclaim their money through a captive bureaucracy. They're attacking the very definition of property – which, after all, depends in part on a legal system that defends everyone's claims of ownership equally. When that definition becomes tenuous or conditional – when the state simply gives up on the notion of justice – this whole American Dream thing recedes even further from reality. 



# THE ADVENTURES OF

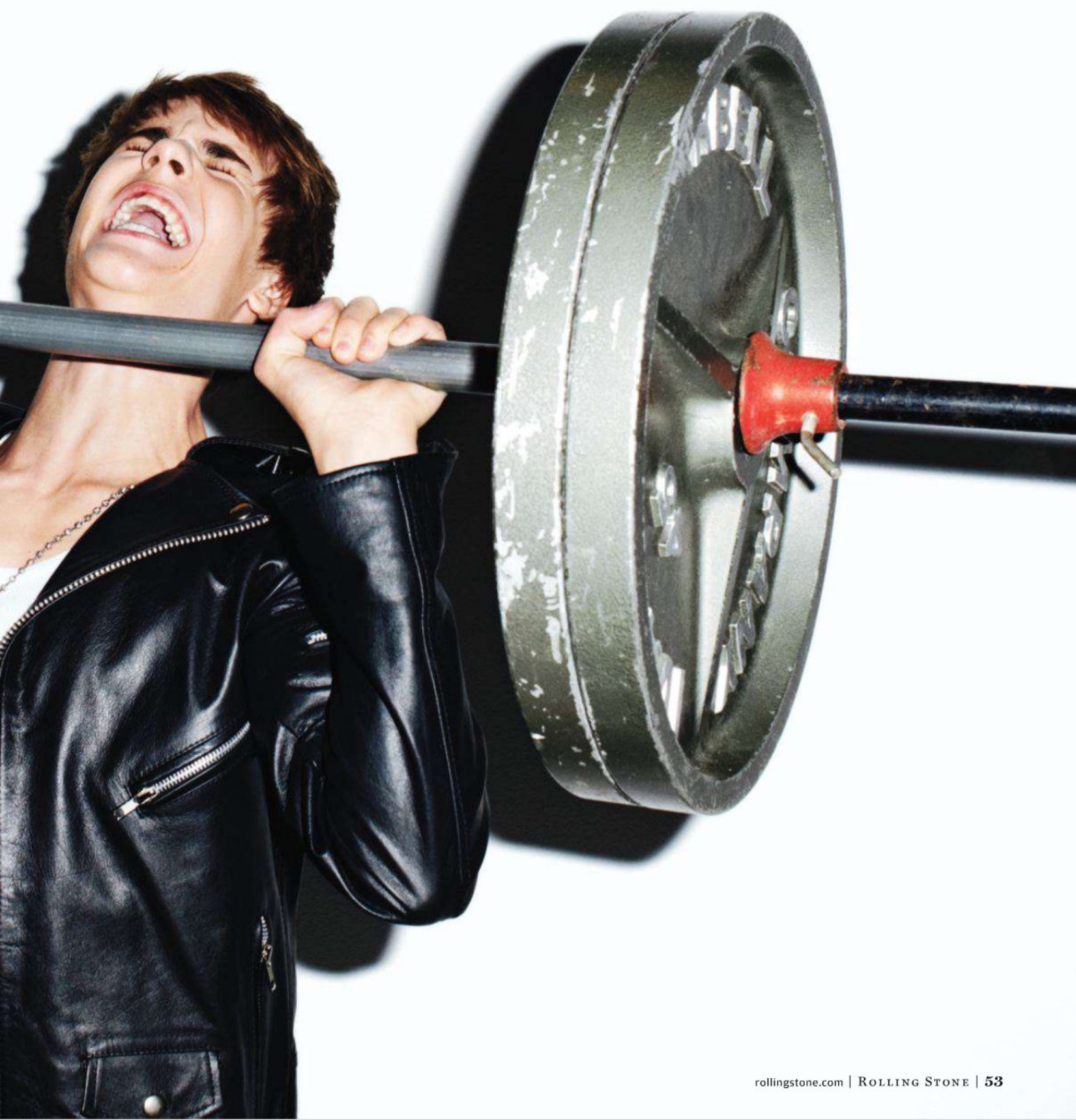
GOD, GIRLS AND BOATLOADS OF SWAG: HOW JUSTIN BIEBER WENT FROM CANADIAN YOUTUBE ODDITY TO THE BIGGEST TEEN IDOL IN THE WORLD

BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRY RICHARDSON





# SUPER BOY





**T**ODAY, I'M THE LUCKIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD. I'M flying to Atlanta to interview my pop-culture crush, Justin Bieber. He's only 16, it's true, but half of woman-kind is in love with him, like Kim Kardashian (who wanted to spend Valentine's Day with a life-size poster of him), Rihanna (who has tweeted about his six-pack) and Katy Perry (who once said, "I would tap that. Yummy"). To the Beliebers, Justin is the most adorable, talented, sensual kid in the world. I've watched his videos at least a dozen times each, I own two of his three albums and I have him on my Twitter feed (though I've never tried to get him to retweet my name on my birthday, or asked him to send me a virtual kiss, or bought a lock of his hair on eBay for my locket). ♥

It's going to be a great day – Justin's even supposed to take me ice-skating! – but he's an hour late, and I'm still waiting around for him at 10 a.m. Then, I notice a black Range Rover idling across the street – the

Biebermobile, the one he got after he got his driver's license last year. He beeps the horn, and I scurry over, flinging open the door.

That's where the soundtrack to this romantic interlude screeches to a halt. The female fantasy about Bieber has a lot to do with wanting him to be your first real boyfriend – or, for older women, with the way that he hearkens back to the time when you had your first boyfriend. But as soon as I see Bieber, I realize that I have deeply confused fantasy with reality. The 122-pound, roughly five-and-a-half-foot-tall person in the driver's seat of this enormous Range Rover is a child – a self-assured one, who may be used to the sound of screaming fans in the bleachers, but still a child, who, as he should, lives in his own circumscribed world, uninterested in anyone's fantasies except for his own. "Yo, sorry for being late," he says. "Traffic." He yawns. "It's so early. People are going to work, I guess. Like, work? What's that?"

Bieber swishes his car through the high-rise canyons of downtown Atlanta, keeping one hand on the steering wheel. "We're going to IHOP, right?" he asks his bodyguard, who looms in the back seat. "I get the crepes at IHOP," he says later. "You know, 'Say you like crepes!' 'I will not say it!' 'Say you like them!' 'Are those those little pancakes? I love those.' 'Oh, then just say you like the pancakes....' 'No!'" Bieber gives a self-satisfied grin, announcing with a flourish, "*Talladega Nights*."

As is often the case with a 16-year-old boy, there's a stereo on in his car played at an ear-splitting volume. There are more moments of quoting lines from movies. There's a discussion of why he's wearing Band-Aids on his fingers: "I dunno," he says. "I'm not hurt or anything, I just like Band-Aids."

Suddenly, Bieber starts fiddling around with something in his teeth, and like a kitten throwing up a hairball, suddenly spits forth some sort of thin piece of plastic. He's been wearing Invisaligns, a kind of invisible braces, for the past year. "My teeth hurt," he says. "They were pointed inwards a little bit, so they had to bring them out, but when they did that, it made a small space in my teeth, and now they have to push that in," he says. He sulks a little, then sticks them back in. And I have to say it's pretty adorable the way he does that. "Ow."

**E**VEN WITH THE BRACES, BIEBER IS America's coolest kid, the one who has dominated every medium in the past year as a direct result of his sweet voice, slick moves and superhuman ability to make panties wet. He's conquering everything in his path, from music charts, a book and a 3D movie, *Never Say Never*, to every last corner of the Internet, with more views on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube than there are people living in midsize Amer-

**"I REALLY DON'T  
KNOW WHY  
GIRLS ARE ACTING  
THAT WAY. AND  
YOU KNOW WHAT?  
I DON'T THINK  
ABOUT IT."**

ican cities. Everywhere he goes, there's a melee: girls trampled underfoot before a concert in Sydney, a Long Island mall overwhelmed and a near-riot in a New Zealand airport. "There's a frenzy going on about Justin, and the frenzy is that he's hot," says L.A. Reid, the head of Bieber's label, Island Def Jam. "The girls just love him. They think he's their boyfriend, that there's a shot for them. Justin sold them a dream, and they are buying it hook, line and sinker."

Bieber fever has reached the point where he can't do concerts anymore in venues without seats. "Otherwise, you've got a mob pushing, and even if it's little girls, they're crawling on top of each other with their arms and elbows, and getting injured," says Kenny Hamilton, Bieber's bodyguard. Bieber doesn't want his fans getting hurt, but he doesn't spend much time thinking about the reasons behind the frenzy, the answer to why so many girls are desperate to bestow their virginity upon him. "I really don't know why they're acting that way," says Bieber, disengaging his braces again, but this time, he doesn't spit them out – he just leaves them rumbling around in his mouth. "And you know what? I don't think about it. My attitude is, why ask questions when things are going so well? Ain't no questions that should be asked in this situation!" He nods a little, laughing, and then shrugs. "They love me, and that's it."

That's the way Bieber talks, jauntily and a little suave, with a bit of Ebonics – similar to most cool white boys in America, even if he's really from Canada. "I'll never be an American citizen," he says, and adds, half-jokingly, "You guys are evil. Canada's the best country in the world." When pressed on the reasons for Canada's supremacy, he points to everything from traveling American college students who put Canadian flags on their backpacks to diffuse any potential tension, to health care. "We go to the doctor, and we don't need to worry about paying him, but here, your whole life, you're broke because of medical bills," says Bieber. "My bodyguard's baby was premature, and now he has to pay for it. In Canada, if your baby's premature, he stays in the hospital as long as he needs to, and then you go home."

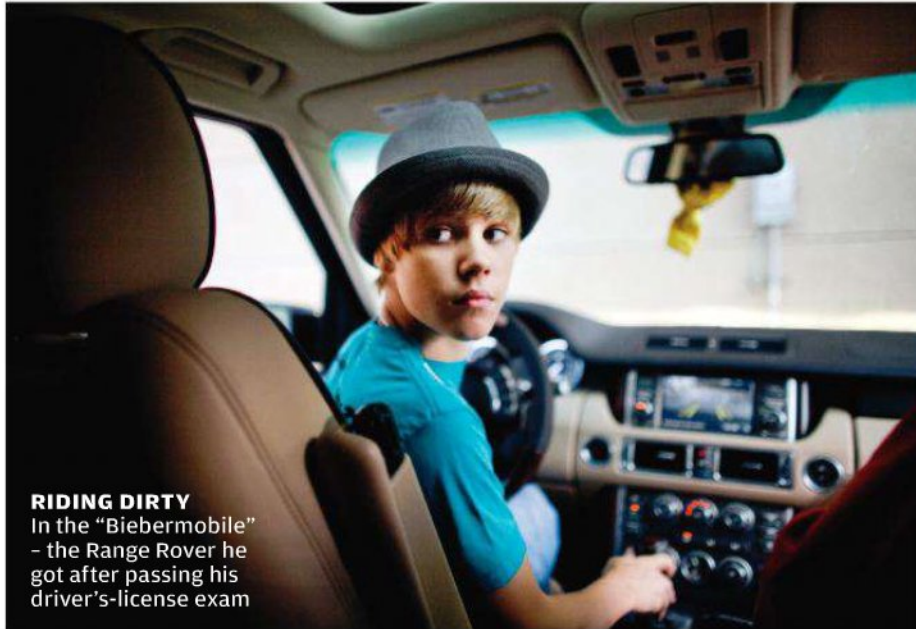
That's right, Bieber truly does have a sympathetic and emotional side, but that doesn't mean that he sits around mooning over girls the way that he does on his records, where he's always either talking about being in love, or wondering why his love broke up with him, or about the "first dance" he's going to have with you, one where he promises "to be gentle," because he knows "we gotta do it slowly." In real life, Bieber is a die-hard hip-hop fan. In his Range Rover, he plays records by his pal Lil Twist, Lil Wayne and Soulja Boy, in particular his song about hopping out of bed to turn on his "swag," because he's

VANESSA GRIGORIADIS wrote the "True Blood" cover story in RS 1112.



taking a “look in the mirror” to say “what’s up, yeah, I’m getting money, oh.”

“Swag” is Bieber’s favorite word, and he punctuates hundreds of sentences with it today. He points to the front of his over-size black T-shirt, which features Mickey Mouse. “See, Mickey’s got a chain on here, so that’s why I put mine on too,” he says. “Swag.” The chains, too, are “swag,” of course, loaded down with a dog tag and a cross made of black diamonds, which swing this way and that, low on his chest as he makes his way around town. “That’s right, I wear black diamonds instead of regular ones,” he says, nodding his head a little, “because I’m not flashy, just *flossssy*.”



**RIDING DIRTY**  
In the “Biebermobile”  
— the Range Rover he  
got after passing his  
driver’s-license exam

At the IHOP, Bieber slips into a booth, hardly looking around to see if he’s recognized. “See, it’s 11 a.m. now, so there’s old people in the IHOP,” he says. “Come here after four, it’s a different story, but now all the kids are in school. All these people are, like, grandmothers. If you had moms in here... it would be bad. The moms are the worst.”

He gets the crepes, Nutella ones with bananas, and strawberries on top, and then recites about 10 more Will Ferrell jokes, including the one from *The Other Guys* about a tuna eating a lion, and another about ordering a “half-caf” in *Kicking and Screaming*. He talks about what he wants to do today: He needs to stop by his studio, and maybe buy a toiletry bag, because he never had one, and now he’s got all this adult stuff to carry, like deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, and then he’s got to take off for L.A., where he’s hoping to hang out with a friend, a music producer, who just got his driver’s license too, and they might try out a Ferrari. He might be moving to L.A. after his next tour, but he doesn’t like it there much — in L.A., his defenses go up, because he can’t walk around anywhere and is always getting trailed by the paparazzi. “I hate paparazzi,” he says. “They’re stalkers with a camera. If some-

one’s following you, that’s automatically a crime, but if they have a camera, it’s OK? I don’t agree with that at all.”

There’s one thing I didn’t hear in his to-do list, though. What about our ice-skating date? “What, someone said we were going to ice-skate?” he says, raising an eyebrow to communicate just how corny he thinks that idea is.

When the check arrives, I try to pay, but he throws down a card. “I have a credit card,” he starts boasting, but then thinks better of it. “Well, it’s a bank card, which is kind of like a credit card. After all, this card does have credit, and credit means that you don’t have to carry money...”

**B**IEBER MAY NOT HAVE ACCESS to his money until he’s 18, but one would imagine that he has gobs of it. He said he doesn’t think about money much, though. “I don’t love money, because once you start loving money, you’ve got a big house and nice cars and just an empty heart, and that’s the truth, I’m not just saying that,” he says, and wow, does he look cute when he says the word “heart.”

Bieber considers himself somewhat “street,” because he was born into a poor, broken family. His mom, Pattie Mallette, a tiny woman (at least a few inches shorter than Bieber) with a pixie face and enormous blue eyes, had a horror story of a childhood: She was sexually abused as a child and left home at 15. “I was messed up on drugs and alcohol,” says Mallette. “At 17, I went into the hospital for trying to commit suicide.” She called on a higher power: “I decided to call out and say, ‘God, if you’re real, if you’ve got a better way, show me,’” she says. “And He did. He gave me a reason to live.”

Mallette turned her life around, learning Web design and joining an evangelical church, the kind with emphasis on the power of prayer, semi-acoustic modern Christian rock and lots of talk about

Jesus. Within a couple of years, though, she became pregnant with Justin, out of wedlock. She couldn’t find a full-time job, so she took a job at Zellers, a Walmart-like chain store. Bieber’s dad, Jeremy, a ripped young fighter who competed in a UFC-like Muay Thai league, was in and out of the picture. “My dad would take me to training with him, and I’d spar and kick the bags,” says Bieber. “He was really good. He never lost.”

Soon, Mallette was forced to move into a public-housing complex, into a basement-level apartment. “That place was really dirty,” says Bieber. “We had mousetraps everywhere, because there were mice — uh, mice — in the house. I didn’t have a real bed. I slept on a blue pullout couch in my room. We didn’t have anything in the fridge, ever, except maybe lunch meat for school, and Kraft macaroni and cheese.”

Bieber didn’t have a lot of friends in the building, but Mallette’s young friends always dropped by in the evenings, sometimes bringing instruments. Mallette fiddled around on the piano and knew a few chords on the guitar. “I’m not a musician, but music was a big part of my life, because my friends played,” says Mallette. “At home, I’d start jamming with friends, and Justin would grab a djembe. It was a way for both of us to connect with people.”

Bieber impressed Mallette’s friends by keeping a beat on a kitchen chair when he was a preschooler, and picking up the drums thereafter. He was intensely social at school, and sometimes received detention for talking to friends in class. There wasn’t money for music lessons, and in any case, Bieber was more focused on sports, like hockey, soccer and golf. He still sang at home and in church, though, and even started busking on a street corner. When he placed second in a local singing competition in his hometown of Stratford, Ontario, the “Stratford Idol,” Mallette uploaded the videos to YouTube, where they attracted tens of thousands of views.

One day, Mallette got a call from Scooter Braun, a Jewish 25-year-old from tony Greenwich, Connecticut, who had made a name for himself in Atlanta throwing hip-hop parties for white kids. Braun had recently quit his marketing job at Jermaine Dupri’s So So Def Records — “My dad told me, ‘If you work for a man’s company and if he disagrees with you, you shut the fuck up and listen to him, but if you know you can do it differently, then leave,’ so I left,” he says — and he was on the hunt for artists he could develop. He found Bieber’s videos accidentally, after clicking on a link to an act that Akon was interested in.

Braun was already working with rapper Asher Roth, who was living on his couch. Braun offered an even better deal to Mallette when he called her. If she agreed to fly Bieber down to Atlanta, and everyone agreed on terms, he’d rent them a town house and get Bieber a deal.



Mallette wasn't sure. "I heard so many horror stories about the music industry," she says. "And when God presented Scooter, I was like, 'Wow, surely you're going to give us a Christian manager.' But when I prayed about Scooter, I had complete peace, so I knew He'd chosen a Jewish manager." Mallette asked to meet his family, to find out what kind of man he was; luckily, his dad was on a layover in Atlanta on his way back to Greenwich after a kite-boarding trip to Brazil, so they were all able to meet up at an airport T.G.I. Friday's. Once Bieber was in, it took only a year and a half to land a deal with Usher and L.A. Reid.

Braun and Bieber are an interesting team, and it's unclear which one motivates the other more – they're both so ambitious, and so hyper, that they seem to look at Justin's fame as a continual baseball game in the ninth inning. Nothing makes them happier than when someone compares Bieber to Michael Jackson, his idol. "Michael is my inspiration, and I want to emulate his career as much as possible," says Bieber. "When he died, I couldn't believe it. It was like, 'Wow, he's gone, I didn't even get to meet him.' I was so sad."

Bieber is focused on not falling into the same traps as Jackson; he's totally against drugs. "Are you curious about cutting off your finger?" he asks, when I ask him if he wants to experiment. "Do you want to know what that feels like? To me, taking drugs is the same type of thing. In the end, all that happens is you get hurt by it."

**A**FTER IHOP, BIEBER PILOTS THE Range Rover toward his vocal coach's studio, where he does a lot of Dougie-ing in front of a mirror, as well as some sort of odd dance that makes him look like a Benihana chef. "I'm cooking," he yelps, "Ninja moves, I'm making food!"

The studio is where Bieber is happiest. "Justin really cares about his music, and he just wants people to give it a chance," says Braun. "He wants to earn the respect of what he thinks are his peers, even if they're not because they're older than him." Bieber's coach Jan Smith, a.k.a. "Mama Jan," a no-nonsense blonde with a small dog in tow, appears, waving a hand to call him in, though he stops to play with her dog first. Bieber has a dog, Sammy, that he doesn't see as much as he'd like: "But now, when I show up, he runs to my grandpa and not to me," says Bieber. He then sticks his bottom lip out and makes the cutest pouty face ever seen on a male.

"Come over here, Mr. Danceaholic," says Mama Jan, and Bieber follows her into the recording booth, where he sits at a console. His fingers flying over the console keys, he starts off with some drumbeats, and then layers a Spanish guitar and some high-hats, before jumping into

the vocal booth to perform some lyrics that he wrote down on his iPhone. "We're providing him with creative time instead of having writers put it on him," Jan says. "This allows him to be part of his process. Not all artists have that."

In the booth: "I got a big hole in my heart, baby," he croons. "I loved you from the start." As soon as the mic is off, he goes, "Swag, swag."

When it's time for vocal training, Bieber takes off his gigantic black diamond tags, then drops for 20 push-ups, to warm up his chest. "When guys start going through puberty, the testosterone kicks in, which is what makes vocal cords thicker, so we've been working on getting Justin's high end back, those real clean high notes," says Jan. "All of a sudden, on his last tour, his voice started to change. He's got a nice tone to his voice now, a good texture, but it doesn't sound like what his fans think he sounds like."

As he starts a series of scales, Jan nods approvingly. "I think he'll get four octaves eventually," says Jan. "He's still young, and he's got a long, lean muscle aperture. Anything past three is just gravy." She turns to him. "You've got 3.2 octaves now."

"You said 3.3 clean yesterday!" he says. "Well, it's the best shape you've been in for a while," she says.

"I'm going to get more octaves than Usher, swag," says Bieber. "Did you know that Usher held the longest note ever in a Broadway show?"

"Uh, that's Barbra Streisand, actually – she holds the record for the longest note ever recorded," says Jan. "Eighteen seconds, in *A Star Is Born*."

Bieber snickers a little. "How do you know she didn't punch in?"

"Well," says Jan, "back then, it was analog."

Bieber goes to leave, but then stops in front of the doorjamb, where there's a bunch of lines in pencil, beginning a couple of years ago, and the last one about a week ago. This is the growth of the Bieber: It's OK, maybe three or four inches. He pulls his body up straight. "Am I tall-

er?" he asks, about four or five times, as Jan swipes a pencil over his head.

He whips around to inspect it – a whole half-inch! Could it be? This is amazing!

"Ah, I think there's something going on there," says Jan, trying to make the addition or nonaddition of height less of a big deal. "It's your hair."

**T**HE HAIR OF THE BIEBS IS A whole article in itself. It's a pleasing hue, made up of all the colors found in hay, and as luxurious in person as it appears onscreen. The hairdo-ness of it, with the bangs hanging low on his forehead, seems to bother him a little, and one of the members of his team says he's been talking lately about cutting it off. Every five minutes, he shakes it off his forehead, like a wet dog trying to shake off water.

The hair is part of what's attractive about him to women, though – for women, he's somewhere between an adorable baby and the male version of Scarlett Johansson circa 2003, back when she was a bodacious, well-coiffed nymph. Bieber may love sports and rap, but he knows how to turn on the charm when he has to; in fact, when he's late to meet me another time, he appears with a fancy candle, a stuffed animal and a card signed "love, me" (the "o" in "love" is shaped like a heart). "I like all girls," Bieber has said, "I like a girl with a nice smile and who's funny," and "as far as looks, my taste is dark hair. But I don't limit myself. I like girls with blond hair too. I like everything!"

Until recently, there was a great deal of mystery over Bieber's dating status, but the paparazzi caught him kissing Disney TV star Selena Gomez in St. Lucia. Bieber seems to feel weird about having to hide his girlfriend, and it's clear from the few things that he says about Gomez, always with a guilty look as though he knows someone is about to rap on his knuckles, that he is desperately in love with her. "Justin is absolutely girl-crazy," says Braun. "Not that he goes after tons of girls, but if there's a girl that he wants to see and he feels that we're not respecting that, he will make our lives hell to see her."

Bieber says that he knows that some people have sex without love, but says that's not for him either. "I don't think you should have sex with anyone unless you love them." When asked if he believes in abstinence until marriage, he looks a bit wary. "I think you should just wait for the person you're... in love with."

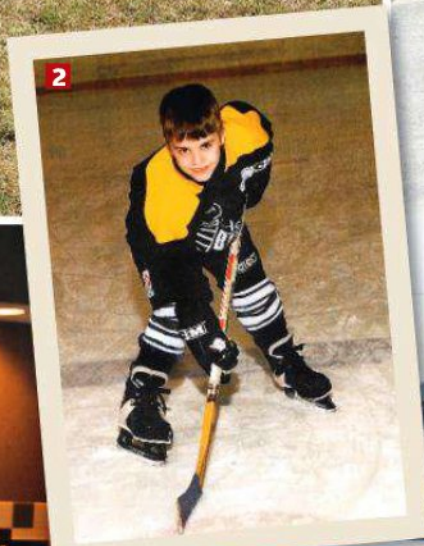
It's funny, Bieber has seemed younger than his 16 years all afternoon, but when I start asking him questions about his beliefs, even if he's not well-educated ("I hate school" is all he will say on the matter) he transforms into an adult, one with a firm grasp of logic and decisionmaking. He says he doesn't read the newspaper, isn't sure which political party he would sup-

**BEFORE BIEBER WAS FAMOUS, "I DIDN'T HAVE A REAL BED," HE SAYS. "WE DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING IN THE FRIDGE EXCEPT LUNCH MEAT."**





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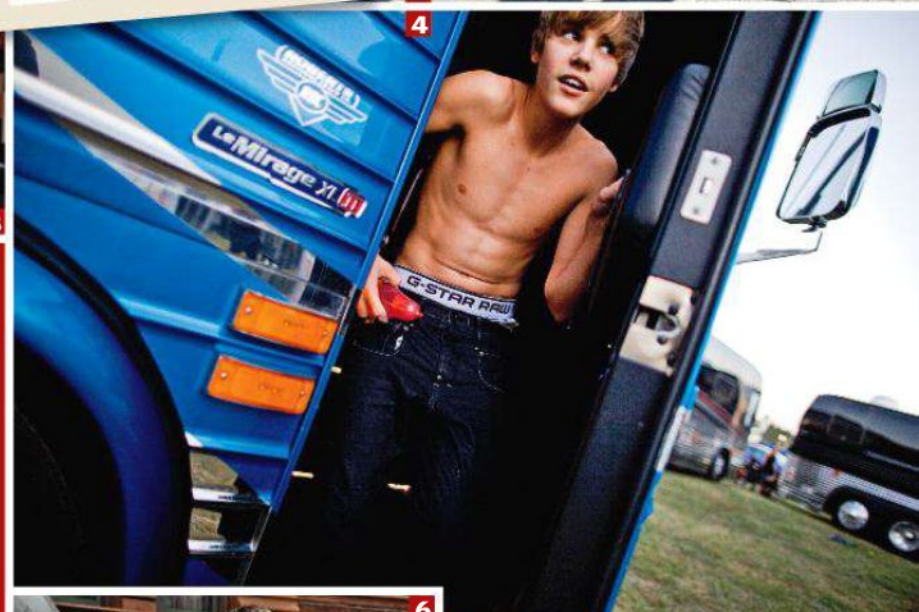
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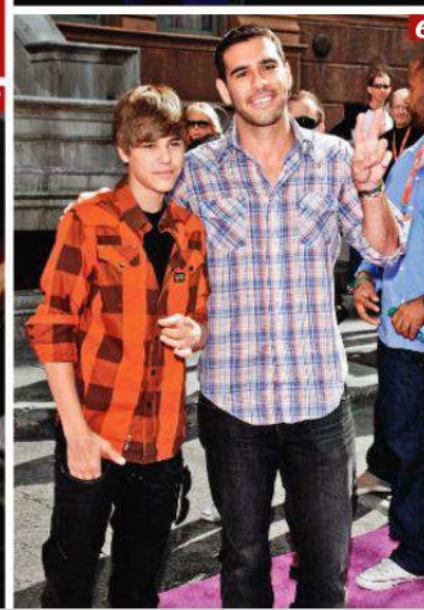
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## Bieber's Universe

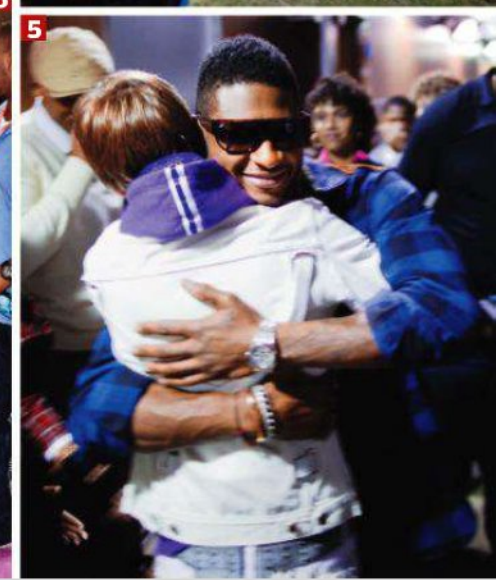
(1) Playing football with crew members before a show at the Timonium, Maryland, state fair. (2) Bieber played hockey, soccer and golf as a child. (3) At the Santa Monica Pier with girlfriend Selena Gomez. (4) A backstage water-balloon fight. (5) With his mentor Usher before going onstage at the Staples Center in Los Angeles in October. (6) With manager Scooter Braun in L.A. in October; Braun stumbled onto the 13-year-old Bieber on YouTube. (7) Leading his band and crew in a prayer before his hometown concert at Toronto's Air Canada Centre. (8) With family - half sister Jazmyn Bieber, father Jeremy Bieber and mother Pattie Mallette.



7



6



5



port if he could vote ("I'm not sure about the parties, but whatever they have in Korea, that's bad"), and thinks it's possible that the 1969 trip to the moon was a conspiracy, because he saw something about that on the Internet. But he also nods solemnly when I ask if he's for or against the death penalty (jury's out on that one for him), and quickly responds when asked if he believes homosexuality is a sin. "It's everyone's own decision to do that," he says. "It doesn't affect me and shouldn't affect anyone else."

Bieber is a heartfelt Christian, but he's nervous talking about it, and makes sure that I'm a Christian too before he opens up. He says that if he could be one character from the Bible, he would choose Job, because he lost everything and stayed faithful to God. He also believes in angels, and thinks he might have been touched by one once, in the form of a kid at Christian camp who gave him a "really good-smelling" sweater and then disappeared, never to be seen again. "I feel I have an obligation to plant little seeds with my fans," he says. "I'm not going to tell them, 'You need Jesus,' but I will say at the end of my show, 'God loves you.'"

He also says that he's going to heaven. "It says in the Bible that you go to heaven as long as you have God in your heart and ask for forgiveness of your sins," he says, with a smile that could warm the coldest heart.

He's definitely against abortion, too. "I really don't believe in abortion," he says. "I think [an embryo] is a human. It's like killing a baby." Even in the case of rape? "Um," he says. "Well, I think that's just really sad, but everything happens for a reason. I don't know how that would be a reason." He looks confused. "I guess I haven't been in that position, so I wouldn't be able to judge that."

And that's it. Bieber's pretty pro-love: "I don't agree with war either, necessarily," he says. "I think everyone should just get along. I don't understand why people attack. What's the point of killing people — power? If no one cared about power, then no one would have wars. Canada doesn't go around attacking people."

**W**HEN HE'S DONE IN THE studio, Bieber starts to pilot his Range Rover toward the ESPN Zone, but it's closed, so he decides to go to a Dave and Buster's arcade. "I know where it is and how to get there too, swag," he says. "No one will be there because kids still aren't out of school." Then he affects a cool

pose. "I used to freak out at arcades, but now, I'm like, whatever." In the arcade, he walks swiftly over to the pool tables, playing a few games at an advanced-beginner level while an overhead TV plays music videos. John Mayer appears with guitar in hand, playing an acoustic version of "Free Fallin'." "Hey, I know that song!" says Bieber. "That's from *Jerry Maguire*."

Afterward, Bieber stops by his house to pick up his "swaggy" new toiletry bag from his assistant, for all his new adult creams and gels. Then he starts making his way to L.A., heading to the airport in an SUV with tinted windows. It's weird to be leaving Atlanta; he wants to see Selena, but L.A. represents a lot that he doesn't like — paparazzi, interviews with prying

title of his next album (*Believe*) and shows off a chargeable case that he's bought for his iPhone. "You need a new BlackBerry," he says, inspecting mine. "Yours has a ball still. The new ones don't have that, and they're better." The British Bieber turns to Kenny. "At pool, she said something about playing with my balls. Quite funny."

Kenny laughs and turns to me, with a look on his face that's only partially friendly: "Hello, I'm Chris Hansen with *Dateline NBC*, and we're doing a special on older women who like younger boys...."

Bieber laughs mildly and then starts fiddling with his two computers, one of which he claims is the only black MacAir in the world. He balances it on his knees, opening it up with the intent of typing

something, but when he realizes that I'm seeing his wallpaper, a picture of him and Selena against an orange sunset, he hurriedly shuts it.

At the airport, Bieber is shuttled through security by a special escort, and into a window seat in first class, with Braun next to him, and the rest of the crew in coach. "I don't mind flying on a regular plane — I don't think I'd want one of my own," he says. "No one can get up out of their seats while we're flying, so it's OK for me." He eats a couple of Twix and an apple, halfheartedly reads a chapter of a book for school, uses the

plane's Wi-Fi to iChat, and builds some beats and guitar around the vocals he created in the studio earlier in the day. But once the plane lands at LAX, Kenny calls Braun from coach; the escort who is supposed to meet Bieber just called to tell him that there are paparazzi at the gate. They must have gotten a flight manifest. They are waiting for him.

Normally, the paps wait downstairs, by the arrivals, so the fact that they were right outside, at the plane's gate, freaks Bieber out. He puts on a baseball cap, drawing his blue hoodie over it, and then begins to retreat into his shell. Braun tries making light conversation with him, but his answers start getting shorter, and then, after he grabs his bags and starts walking out, he puts on his sunglasses. He walks as quickly as he can through the airport, with cameras after him, and crumpled businessmen pulling out their cellphones to take photos for their daughters, and the feeling of thousands of eyes on him.

This is what has given him his life. But how much longer will it last? "I don't think of myself as powerful," says Bieber. "If anything, my fans are powerful. It's all in their hands. If they don't buy my albums, I go away."



**THRILLER**  
"I try to emulate Michael Jackson's career as much as possible."

adults, meeting people that want something from him, people projecting their fantasies onto him. "Justin doesn't trust many people anymore," says Braun. He's much less trusting than he used to be, in general. "But it's weird," continues Braun, "because Justin trusts the fans. He feels like they know the real him."

In the car, Bieber talks for a while in a British accent, says that he wants to play *Oliver Twist* in his next movie, tells us the

**"ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT CUTTING OFF YOUR FINGER?" HE SAYS ABOUT DRUGS. "DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THAT FEELS LIKE?"**



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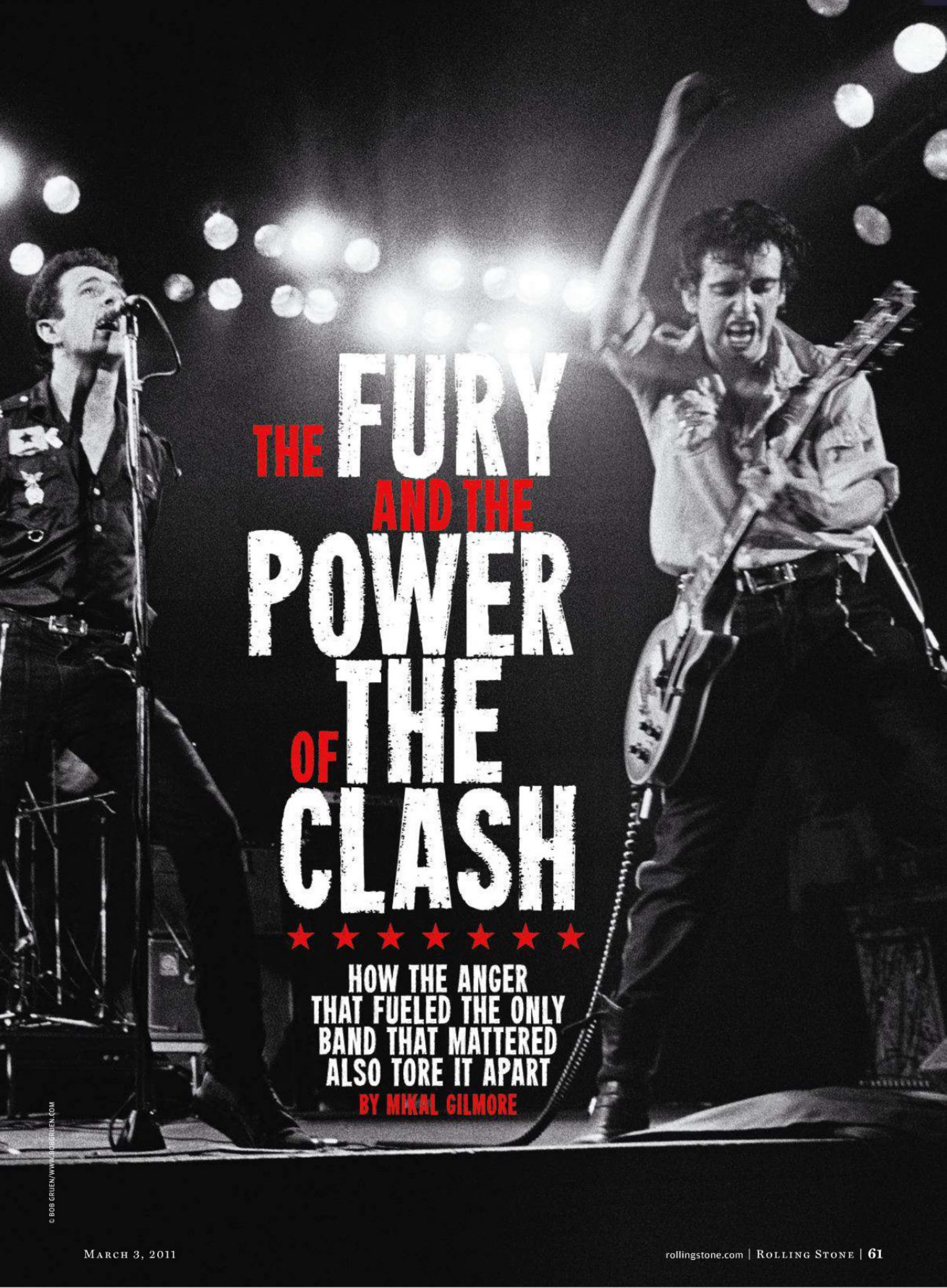
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**CLASH CITY ROCKERS**  
Paul Simonon, Joe Strummer  
and Mick Jones (from left) in  
Boston, February 1979





# THE FURY AND THE POWER OF THE CLASH



HOW THE ANGER  
THAT FUELED THE ONLY  
BAND THAT MATTERED  
ALSO TORE IT APART

BY MIKAL GILMORE



**T**HE MOMENT THAT BEST EXEMPLIFIED THE CLASH didn't come in England, where they helped tear rock & roll history in half. Nor in America, where they fought for a recognition that, once won, helped pull them apart. Instead, it took place in August 1977, at a music festival in Liège, Belgium. The band was playing before 20,000 people and had been under fire from a crowd that was throwing bottles at the stage. But that wasn't what bothered lead singer Joe Strummer. What enraged him was a 10-foot-high barbed-wire fence strung between concrete posts and forming a barrier between the group and the audience – dividing, as one reporter put it, the privileged from the less privileged. ★ “Why is this space here?” the singer demanded to know. Strummer jumped from the stage and attacked the fence, trying to pull it down, while guitarist Mick Jones, bassist Paul Simonon and drummer Topper Headon

played on warily. Festival stage guards dragged Strummer back, while the Clash's crew struggled to pull security off Strummer. Later, Simonon told writer Chris Salewicz, “It didn't seem like a gig. It was more like a war.”

The Clash were the only performers at the show who tried to do anything about the obstacle. They were more willing to run the risk of the crowd than to tolerate barbed wire that was meant to fend off that crowd. This is more or less what the Clash were about: fighting the good fight that few others would fight. They first made their mark in British music in early 1977 with “White Riot,” a provocative song about frustration with brutal authority. It was the time of the Sex Pistols, the band that spearheaded punk as a musical and cultural uprising that blazoned discontent with British society. The Clash would outlast the Sex Pistols and come to epitomize punk, then outdistance the movement with sounds and ambitions all their own, until the band's effective end in 1983. Along the way, they asserted the boldest political worldview of any artists in popular music's history, moving from the narrow obsessions of U.K. punk sedition to the fiery reality of the world outside. The first time I met the band – in London, Christmas week, 1978 – Strummer told me, “We're trying to do something new; we're trying to be the greatest group in the world, and that also means the biggest. At the same time, we're trying to be radical – I mean, we never want to be *really* respectable – and maybe the two can't coexist, but we'll try.”

But the Clash's story isn't just about ideals. It is also about power, who has it and who doesn't – in the real world, and in the band. By the time the Clash's mission was done, they had suffered derision, heartbreak and betrayal, at their own hands. “[As] it got bigger and bigger,” Strummer said years later, “I felt worse and worse. It had something to do with what those songs are saying.”

**M**ICK JONES, JOE STRUMMER and Paul Simonon – the three enduring members of the band – each came from disrupted family lives, the sort of privation that would cause them to form a new union, but also never to fully trust that union. Jones, who wrote and arranged much of the band's music, was born in June 1955 to parents who quarreled intensely. “They had a bomb shelter in the basement of the flats,” Jones recalled in Don Letts' documentary *Westway to the World*. His grandmother would take Mick down to the shelter when they argued, “and we'd wait for the raid to pass.” When he was eight, Mick's parents divorced and his mother moved to the United States, leaving Mick in the care of his grandmother. “Psychologically,” he said, “it really did me in.” In 1968, Jones found recompense in the guitar power that he heard in Cream's *Disraeli Gears*, though in the years that followed he favored the more unkempt sounds of the Rolling Stones and Mott the Hoople, and American bands like the MC5, the Stooges and the New York Dolls. He took up guitar seriously in 1972, with the aim of forming a raunchy band. In early 1975, he founded

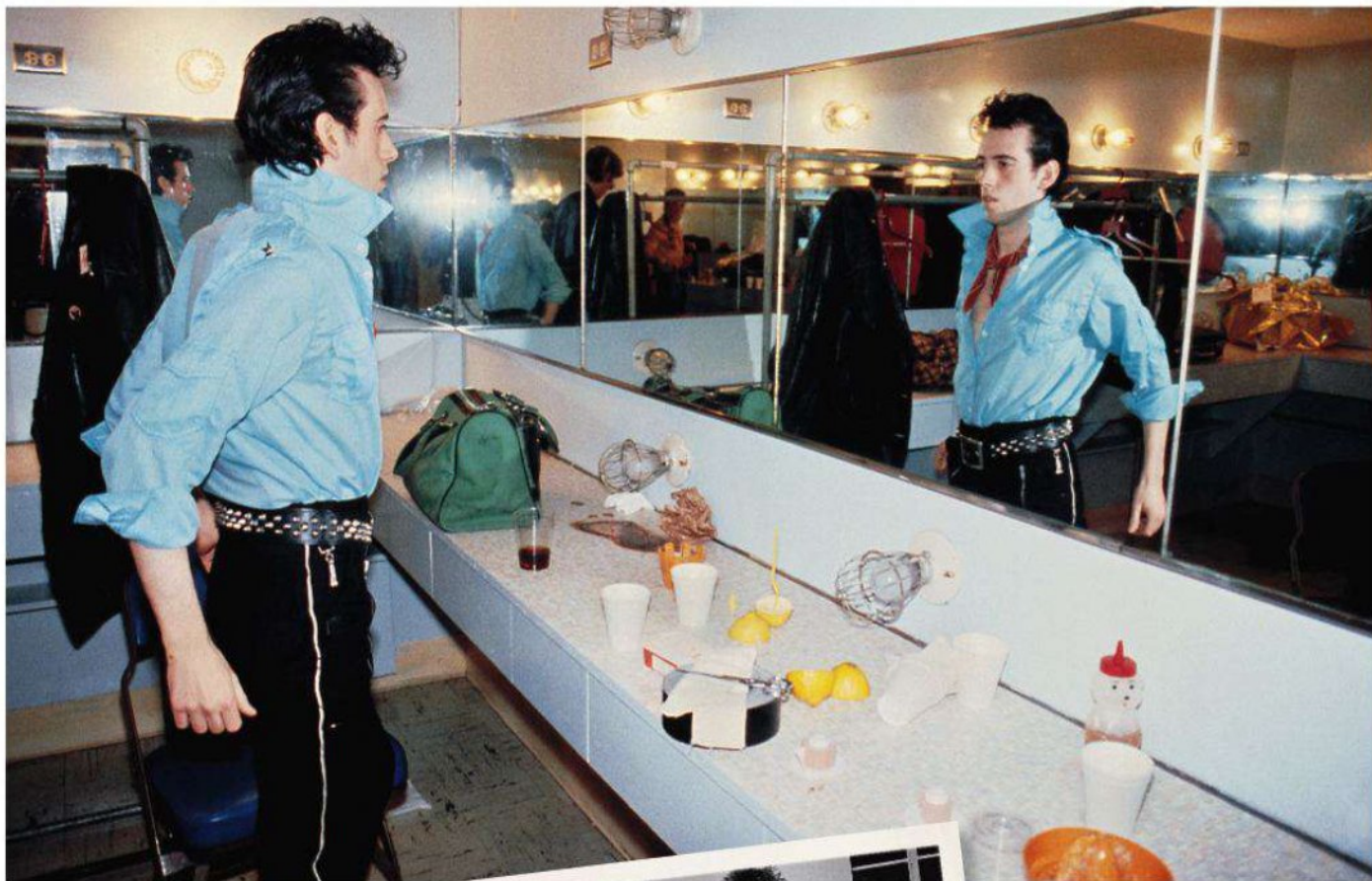
★★★  
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 ★★★

the group London SS – a workshop unit more than anything else.

That same year, Mick Jones met Bernard Rhodes during a rock & roll show at a dingy pub. Rhodes – in some ways the most crucial and troubling figure in the Clash's story – was the son of a Jewish woman who fled Germany in 1945 while pregnant with Bernard, who was born in London's East End (according to Clash biographer Pat Gilbert, Rhodes' mother bought a birth certificate on London's black market to establish his citizenship). Rhodes never knew his father, and perhaps that lack played a part in the curious dynamic that later developed between him and Joe Strummer. When Mick Jones met him, Rhodes was printing T-shirts for conceptualist entrepreneur Malcolm McLaren at the controversial rock & roll boutique Sex, on London's King's Road. Both McLaren and Rhodes had been enamored of the Situationists, a Marxist movement that promoted provocative art ideas as the means to political change and that played a part in the May 1968 Paris revolts. McLaren wanted to apply Situationist principles to London's rock & roll scene, which had grown out of touch with Britain's social realities. He'd been looking to the New York scene that produced Patti Smith, Television, Richard Hell, Talking Heads and, perhaps most important, the Ramones, who created the breakneck template for punk. McLaren was determined to relocate that new sound and attitude to London, yet recast it for a disruptive cultural impact aimed at British social mores and the rock status quo. He found his means in the Sex Pistols, a band assembled by a Sex shop regular, guitarist Steve Jones. Once Rhodes introduced McLaren to John Lydon, an otherworldly singer with a strange charisma – soon to be known as Johnny Rotten – the Sex Pistols were ready to move into notoriety and legend. However, McLaren pushed Rhodes away from any oversight of the band. There was a competitive edge between the two men, and McLaren – who envisioned orchestrating the new scene that would outrage popular music – wasn't eager to share the moment.

Rhodes, though, didn't intend to take a minor role in this cultural event; he wanted a band of his own to mastermind. In Mick Jones, he saw a quick learner with a necessary core belief that rock & roll should work as an agitation. Some of the musicians who moved in and out of Jones' London SS were also part of the scene around the Sex Pistols, including Keith Levene, an early guitarist in the Clash. Rhodes was looking for an equivalent to Johnny Rotten, and Jones hoped he'd found that person in Paul Simonon, a lanky young man with craggy good looks. Like Jones, Simonon came from a broken family. His parents separated when he was seven, and in his teens, he lived with his father, an art teacher and devoted com-



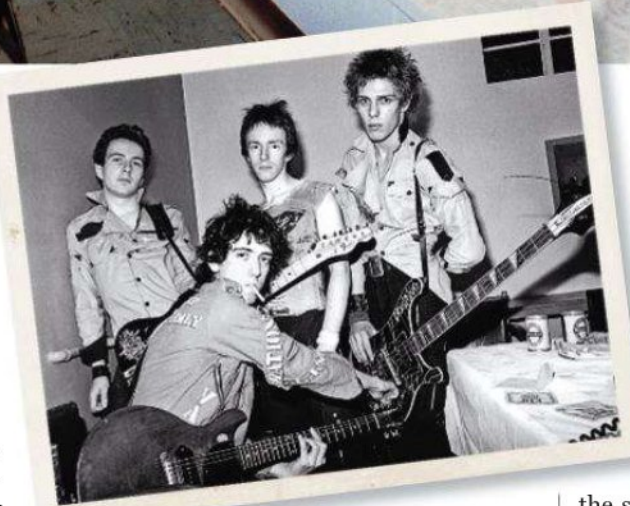


munist. Though Paul once proclaimed, "Art is dead – it's not the way to reach the kids; rock & roll is," he would also become an art expert, and eventually oversaw much of the Clash's graphic design. When Jones met Simonon in late 1975, he liked the soft-spoken young man's look – cowboy boots; short, swept-up hair; oblivious gait – but Simonon could only chant off-key. Still, Rhodes persuaded Jones to teach him bass guitar: Simonon possessed an insouciant cool that surpassed immediate musical talent.

Others came and went – in 1976, drummer Terry Chimes joined, and in that same year, guitarist Keith Levene would leave. Mick Jones was shaping up as a prolific songwriter, but he didn't have a feral voice, which was what Rhodes wanted: a frontman who could tell hard truths unflinchingly.

**I**F YOU LOOK AT FILMS OF STRUMMER from his childhood (bits can be glimpsed in Julien Temple's 2007 film *Joe Strummer: The Future Is Unwritten*), you see a playful, frenetic boy mugging before a camera. Even in still images – posing with his father, Ronald Mellor, his mother, Anna, and brother, David, 18 months Joe's senior – there's an irrepressible rascal in the young Strum-

Contributing editor MIKAL GILMORE wrote about the Beatles in RS 1086.



#### ALL THE YOUNG PUNKS

Mick Jones (top) at the Santa Monica Civic Arena, 1979. Above: Joe Strummer, Jones, Topper Headon and Paul Simonon (from left) in November 1977.

mer's face. The mischief stayed with Strummer, but along the way, a wary and haunted quality overshadowed him. His eyes were always flitting, maybe looking for something to trust, or looking for an escape route.

Strummer's father was an English diplomatic officer, his mother a diplomat's wife. It was not a wealthy family, though Ronald's work took the family to faraway places – Cairo, Mexico City, Bonn and Ankara, Turkey, where Strummer was born on August 21st, 1952, as John Mellor. In 1961, concerned that all the travel might prove a detriment to their sons' educations, the Mellors left Joe and David at a London boarding school. Joe felt that his par-

ents had abandoned him and David in an environment that brought out a hardened side in him, and a painful remoteness in his brother. Years later, Strummer talked about how the experience had shaped his worldview: "Authority is supposedly grounded in wisdom," he said. "But I could see from a very early age that authority was only a system of control, and it didn't have any inherent wisdom."

When he was a teenager, Strummer found morale in the same sort of sources that had heartened Mick Jones. In particular, he said, the Rolling Stones' 1964 single "Not Fade Away" transformed him. "That's the moment I thought, 'This is completely opposite of all the other stuff we're having to suffer here. . . . I decided, 'Here is at least a gap in the clouds.'"

Strummer would need the uplift. In the summer of 1970, his brother, David – who, to Joe's dismay, had an attraction to England's neo-fascist movement, the National Front – went missing. A few days later, David's body was found under a bush in London's Regent's Park; he had taken a massive overdose of aspirin. The news of his elder brother's suicide, and the impact of making the formal identification of the body, left Strummer unsettled in ways he could never discuss fully. When punk later became Strummer's means and purpose, he never subscribed to the nihilism some found so romantic. Joe's own anger and grief cut too deep for him to surrender to the romance



of oblivion, because of the day he'd had to identify the cold reality of it lying in a London morgue.

After school, Strummer made a career out of an itinerant life. In 1972, he began playing an acoustic guitar and singing folk songs in London subway stations for spare change, and in 1974, he joined the city's radical squatters' movement, taking over an abandoned residence at 101 Waltham Road and making it livable, rent-free. The collective became the foundation for the 101ers, a band that began by playing early rock & roll and R&B songs. At that time, several back-to-basics rock & roll groups were cropping up at London's small bars and taverns, in a pub-rock scene that included Dr. Feelgood, Eddie and the Hot Rods, and the loose and slapdash 101ers. Joe – who now took on the name Strummer, in deference to his limitations as a guitarist – proved a rough-hewn singer; his several misshapen teeth had given him a guttural embouchure. But he had a galvanic sense of rhythm and an impassioned R&B-informed delivery that made the 101ers a prime draw. In March 1976, Strummer wrote and sang lead vocals on the 101ers' single, "Keys to Your Heart," for Chiswick Records. But in April, Strummer began questioning the band's future, after seeing the Sex Pistols open a show for the 101ers. "As soon as Johnny Rotten hit the stand . . . the writing was on the wall," Strummer recalled in Chris Salewicz's 2006 biography, *Redemption Song: The Ballad of Joe Strummer*. "I realized immediately that we were going nowhere, and the rest of my group hated them. They didn't want to watch it or hear anything about it."

By May 1976, Mick Jones, Paul Simonon and Keith Levene had taken note of the 101ers – in particular, the dynamic lead singer. During a chance meeting on a London street, Jones told Strummer he'd seen him perform with the 101ers; Jones didn't care much for the band, but he thought Strummer was "great." Around this time, Levene took Rhodes to see the 101ers at a pub show, and afterward, backstage, the manager asked Strummer if he wanted to become lead singer for a new punk band that would rival the Sex Pistols. Rhodes gave Joe 48 hours to decide. Within 24, Joe Strummer joined the Clash.

**I**N 1976, BRITISH PUNK – WHICH HAD burgeoned as a result of the Sex Pistols – was an argument for new intense possibilities, and one of its tenets was to dismiss the past. Joe Strummer was ready for it. "The day that I joined the Clash," he later said, "was very much back to square one, Year Zero. We were almost Stalinist in the way that you had to shed all your friends, or everything that you'd known, or every way that you'd played before."

Bernard Rhodes gave the band an urgent decree: "Write about what's impor-



## Death or Glory

(1) Mick Jones and Joe Strummer backstage in November 1977. (2) Manager Bernard Rhodes, 1982. (3) Strummer and Johnny Rotten during the 1976 Anarchy in the U.K. Tour.

tant," he said. "The thing was to be relevant," Strummer said later, "to have some kind of root in human existence." Paul Simonon made another invaluable contribution: He gave the band its name, after noting how often the word cropped up in daily news to describe increasing social and political conflicts in England. "I didn't just stumble upon it," he told Chris Salewicz. "We were so highly attuned to what we needed by then that

the word leapt out at me from the pages of the paper." The Clash played their first show on July 4th, 1976, opening for the Sex Pistols. They were kinetic from the start, lurching and crashing about the stage in unruly movements, Strummer pumping his right arm and leg in unison at impossibly high-speed rhythms, working himself into an exhausted frenzy, clinging to his microphone stand so he could stay on his feet.



This was probably punk's most daring and exciting season, but there were occasional impulses that allowed ugly risks, including sporadic melees at shows. A greater concern was that a few regulars in London's punk scene began wearing Nazi fashion as a means to offending British sensibility. When Siouxsie Sioux of Siouxsie and the Banshees, on the same bill with the Clash at London's 1976 Punk Festival, showed up wearing a swastika armband, Rhodes refused to let her play with the Clash's equipment unless she removed the armband. Siouxsie's display had been a foolish and inexcusable gesture, especially given England's sociopolitical atmosphere at the time. The right-wing, often openly racist National Front was on the rise in the mid-1970s and had fought violently with leftist groups in London's streets. Many punks hadn't yet thought through the political implications of their movement, but the Clash already knew which side they stood on. In August 1976, after witnessing London police provoke a confrontation in a largely black community – resulting in Britain's worst riot in almost two decades – Joe Strummer found his voice. In the song "White Riot," he pursued the truths underneath the incident: "All the power's in the hands/Of the people rich enough to buy it.../Are you taking over/Or are you taking orders?"

With "White Riot" – the band's first single, in March 1977 – the Clash seized ground as punk's moral center. Whereas the Sex Pistols addressed a darkness at the heart of all things – a rock & roll equivalent of *Beyond Good and Evil* – the Clash still envisioned a good despite evil. Johnny Rotten sang magnificently of an angry negativism, but it could be taken as a permission to something dead-ended. By contrast, Joe Strummer depicted cut-off lives trapped in tower tenements, minorities and young people subject to authoritarian power systems, bristling to make a hope of their own, even if it meant pushing back. On the back of the "White Riot" single sleeve, the Clash ran a quote from a flier for a controversial art exhibition of a few months before: "A clash of generations is not so fundamentally dangerous to the art of government as would be a clash between rulers and ruled." This is how the Clash announced themselves to the world.

**T**HE CLASH'S INCREASING PROMINENCE would also challenge their credibility in unanticipated ways. In January 1977, Rhodes signed the band to CBS Records for £100,000. CBS was one of the biggest labels in the world, and the idea of endorsing a renegade act like the Clash bothered many at the company. Maurice Oberstein, managing director of CBS's U.K. division, dismissed those misgivings. "There was a level of hysteria in the music industry that this is a music that we shouldn't be involved in," he

told Jon Savage in *England's Dreaming*, a history of early punk in the U.K. "There is an inherent fear of the unknown. . . . It seemed perfectly natural: I'd seen Elvis and the Beatles on *Ed Sullivan*: Suddenly, there was another bunch of screamers. The record companies are in business to make money, and I saw the potential that these artists had to be on our label rather than some other label. . . . I wasn't looking at the Clash as a social phenomenon: We were just making records." It was Oberstein's last point, however, that disturbed somebody like Mark Perry, whose punk fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* had championed the band. "If you talk about what the Clash talked about in their songs," he told Marcus Gray, "then they completely sold out. . . . It disappointed me immensely, and I said so. My big quote was, 'Punk died the day the Clash signed to CBS.'"

The criticism stung the Clash, but it also incited them to produce punk's first monu-

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★★★

mental album. *The Clash*, released in April 1977, displayed a band with both a raging attack and a tuneful pop sensibility, plus – in a haunting cover of Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" – an affinity for reggae music that would emerge as a fertile stylistic stream for the group. The album sold well in the U.K., rising to Number 12 on the U.K. album charts, to the bewilderment of many at CBS.

But in the U.S., CBS's Epic Records refused the album and insisted on a more polished effort before presenting the band to American tastes. (The Clash ostensibly had been assured of creative control with CBS, but the label could still decline to release their recordings.) The band accepted the company's suggestion for a new producer, Sandy Pearlman, known for getting a forceful but clean sound with Blue Öyster Cult. By this time, drummer Topper Headon had replaced Terry Chimes in the band. Pearlman marveled at his abilities – especially when Headon played a

complicated pattern backward with ease. During sessions that stretched through much of 1978, Pearlman and the Clash layered a sound that was less frantic than the first album's, but was anything but clean; rather, it was a dense blare. Mick Jones – already feeling hemmed in by the punk dogma of rigid harmonic and rhythmic constructions – worked overtime with Pearlman to build the new album's titanic roar. "There are more guitars per square inch on this record," Pearlman told critic Greil Marcus, "than in anything in the history of Western civilization."

The finished work, *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, was released in November 1978. It soared to Number Two on the U.K. album charts, but despite Epic's insistence on more professional production, it didn't penetrate the Top 100 in America. (The Clash's first album, which Epic had initially refused to release, eventually fared much better in the U.S.) The slow-to-warm American reaction had something to do with how punk was still regarded by many as an anomalous insurrection, though it may have owed as well to the album's cover image depicting a Chinese communist soldier advancing on horseback toward the body of a dead American cowboy. The illustration wasn't simply a taunting poke at what the Clash saw as America's imperial hubris. It also proclaimed that Strummer and Jones were expanding their gaze beyond the confines of British society and politics and were now considering a world full of fearfulness and deathly struggle. The problems were complex, maybe even lethal. In "Guns on the Roof," Strummer sang, "A system built by the sweat of the many/Creates assassins to kill off the few/Take any place and call it a courthouse/This is a place where no judge can stand." Some British critics took issue with these views. Didn't Strummer worry, one interviewer asked in 1978, that he might seem to advocate violent terrorist acts? "I'm impressed by what they're doing," Strummer replied, "and at the same time I'm really frightened by what they're doing. It's not an easy subject." But Strummer knew the odds. In "(White Man) In Hammersmith Palais," he sang, "It won't get you anywhere/Fooling with your guns/The British army is waiting out there/An' it weighs fifteen-hundred tons."

In truth, the Clash's political stance not only helped secure their place in rock & roll history, but it also proved prescient. A few months after *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, Conservative Party leader Margaret Thatcher came to power as Britain's prime minister, capitalizing on the nationalist sentiment advanced by the National Front. Thatcher's time came and went, and though one could say the same for the Clash, their truths still resonate. In the mournful "English Civil War," Strummer asked, "Who got caught out on their unawares/When the New Party Army came



marching right up the stairs." More than 30 years later, the song's apprehension still seems to have a place in describing a present moment.

**B**Y THE TIME "GIVE 'EM ENOUGH Rope" came out, punk no longer existed as the same sort of insurgent experiment. In January 1978, the Sex Pistols toured America and then fell apart. In the aftermath, a new wave of bands began to favor the sort of abstruse post-punk music that Johnny Rotten (who resumed his given name, John Lydon) would make with former Clash member Keith Levene in Public Image Ltd.

The Clash, though, weren't anxious to heed anybody else's directions, and this included the supervision of Bernard Rhodes. For some time, Mick Jones had been growing wary of Rhodes' demands – especially in light of the manager's insistence that he be granted "complete control." Jones also worried that Rhodes might replace him with Sex Pistols guitarist Steve Jones, and made a pre-emptive move: In October 1978, the Clash fired the manager who had helped form the band and its purposes. Rhodes shot back with graceless comments. "I took them off the streets," he said, "and made them what they are!" He later told writer Pat Gilbert, "I didn't realize that Joe was such a coward." However, Strummer – who seemed to need fatherly guidance even as he deprecated authority – had misgivings about Rhodes' dismissal. "Bernie imagined the Clash," Strummer said in 1991, "and he built it to fit the specifications of his vision. The Clash wouldn't exist without Bernie's vision."

Rhodes won a court order that tied up the Clash's earnings, and the band turned to Epic Records to finance its first U.S. tour; the label grudgingly put forth a modest budget. Though they opened American shows with "I'm So Bored With the U.S.A.," the Clash were nonetheless fascinated with the myths and music of America. This was, after all, a country with remarkable music legacies – folk, blues, R&B, New Orleans jazz, country-western – plus it was the land that had delivered rock & roll in the 1950s. Punk may have claimed to spring self-willed in Year Zero, but the Clash understood that they weren't without essential precursors. "When you've been into American music as long as I have," Strummer said, "to go there is a trip. To ride across the country – even better, on a bus – is another trip. It was fantastic. I got endless amounts of inspiration from it."

The Clash were nearing a pivotal moment. On one hand, Bernard Rhodes was gone; on the other, CBS Records still didn't have much faith in the band's appeal outside England. The Clash also knew they could not hold to punk's narrow aesthetic without running the risk of becoming static, or a dated curio. With *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, the band had sung about mortali-

ty, politics, freedoms and fates being up for grabs. Now, after touring America, the Clash were finding ways to infuse their themes and their sound with music that was at once historic – in some cases ageless – yet forward-leaning. The band would bring all these influences to bear on a groundbreaking collection of songs. This time out, the Clash worked with producer Guy Stevens, who was respected for his recordings with Mott the Hoople but also known for drunken and unpredictable behavior. There were accounts of Stevens swinging a ladder over the heads of the musicians and pouring red wine across the keyboard of an expensive piano that Strummer was playing to realize the sound the producer wanted. (Stevens would die in August 1981, from an overdose of a drug he was taking to control his alcoholism.)

What resulted was one of rock & roll's most prodigious works. *London Calling*

★★★

**JONES ONCE REFUSED TO PLAY "WHITE RIOT"; STRUMMER PUNCHED HIM. "YOU'RE LIKE A TEAM GOING ONSTAGE," HE SAID. "NO ONE LETS ANYONE DOWN."**

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(released in the U.S. in January 1980) opened with the doomful undertow of its apocalyptic title track and closed with the surprising ache – and unabashed pop savvy – of Mick Jones' "Train in Vain." In between were 17 other songs, about defiance, revolution, war, apocalypse and death, but also about the freedom to display delight, vulnerability, doubt and courage in the same breath. "I have lived that kind of day," Jones sang in the album's most affecting verse, from "I'm Not Down," "when none of your sorrows will go away. . . / But I know there'll be some way / When I can swing everything back my way." Which is what the Clash had done: They made a masterpiece on their own terms – a work that has been cited as the best album of the 1980s. The Clash had seized an ambitious creative momentum that nobody since the Beatles had accomplished. By 1980, they were already being called "the only band that matters," and nobody has said that about any other band since and made it stick.

**S**O FAR, THIS MAY SEEM LIKE A story of hard-fought idealism. The Clash genuinely shared the political values they expressed, and they never relinquished those beliefs. But the Clash were not an integral partnership like the Beatles, who had grown up together with a mutual history. There had been unease among the Clash since their earliest days – due partly to the unavoidable stress from working and traveling so intensively in such a short period of time. In particular, the relationship between Strummer and Jones was often embattled. "We have rows almost every day," Strummer said in early 1978, "and we break up almost every day."

Sometimes those tensions flared in nasty ways. Backstage at a Sheffield, England, show in January 1980, Jones told Strummer he wouldn't play "White Riot" for an encore; he was tired of the song. The refusal turned into a shouting match, with Jones throwing a drink into Strummer's face. Joe punched Mick, "hard in the middle of the head," Strummer admitted later. "There was real savagery in the attack," one witness said. "Mick was crying his eyes out." The band went back on and played "White Riot," but midway through, Jones set down his guitar and left the stage. Even so, there was a lot of affection between these men, and respect for each other's talents. "Mick was my best friend at one time," Strummer later told music journalist Robert Hilburn.

With Bernard Rhodes gone, things improved for a time. The Clash had *London Calling* under their belts – it sold well in both England and the U.S. – and when the band assembled to record again in 1980, it had gained an openness to making music in styles outside punk's sonic regimen. Mick Jones had developed an interest in New York's nascent hip-hop scene, Joe Strummer and Paul Simonon delved into reggae dub abstractions more deeply, Topper Headon experimented with jazz-informed rhythmic patterns – and collectively, they kept exploring rock & roll forms, though with uncommon textural elements. At the project's end, the Clash emerged with 36 tracks encompassing a staggering stylistic diversity that ranged from mellifluous pop and soulful gospel to experimental tape collages, cutting-edge funk and a poignant children's choral group, much of the music arranged in uncommon structures. It was enough material, Jones insisted, to justify the release of three long-playing vinyl albums in a single package, as *Sandinista!* (The title – also Jones' idea – came from the song "Washington Bullets" and was a tribute to the Nicaraguan revolutionary movement that had overthrown corrupt and brutal dictator Anastasio Somoza Debayle in 1979. The Reagan administration was working at the time to unseat the Sandinistas.)



CBS Records was furious with the Clash – not because of the album's implicit Marxist sympathies, but because the band was releasing so much music at the price of a single album. Mick Jones declined any suggestions to cut back on the material, which led to a dividing point in the band's history. Over the years, *Sandinista!* has been viewed as both a magnificence of riches and as a bounty of disorder and indulgence, though it's a bulwark of originality that still plays beautifully. In response to the Clash's obstinacy, CBS refused to tour the band, and *Sandinista!* did poorly in sales. Wounded by the lack of acceptance, Joe Strummer began to suspect that Mick Jones' freewheeling production style had been a fatal flaw. In the years that followed, Strummer would renounce the album as a mistake, though later in his life he again defended *Sandinista!*

Strummer decided to use the album's failure to correct what he saw as wrong in the first place. In early 1981, he gave the

and in late 1981, he was arrested at Heathrow Airport for narcotics possession. Joe Strummer was growing disheartened over Headon's intractability and over his fluctuating beats onstage.

Meantime, Rhodes returned with big ideas – and big assertions. When a British reporter asked him how his role with the band had changed, Rhodes snapped back, "I own this group!" To offset CBS's unwillingness to fund a tour, Rhodes booked the band for a series of dates in Times Square in New York, at Bond's Casino, beginning in late May 1981. Things seemed to misfire almost every inch of the way – fire marshals forced last-minute closures of the club, fans rioted, a disrespectful audience heaped abuse on the shows' openers – rap groups the Treacherous Three, and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five – and the Clash themselves delivered off-center performances (owing in part to Headon's drug use). "Doing that 15 nights in a row, it nearly killed us," Strummer

When the Clash's fifth album was released, in May 1982, as *Combat Rock*, Strummer's vision pretty much prevailed. Surprisingly, it proved fairly commercial and had the effect of finally delivering the Clash to the masses. Two singles, "Should I Stay or Should I Go" and "Rock the Casbah," made it onto U.S. singles pop charts, and the album itself became the Clash's best-selling. CBS was, for once, eager to put the band on the road.

But after some Scottish dates failed to sell out in advance, Rhodes panicked and approached Strummer. "You've got to disappear," he said, figuring that a missing Joe Strummer would make headlines and stir interest. When Strummer truly vanished, without telling Rhodes where he had gone, the manager panicked again. He hadn't told the other band members about the stunt, and after Strummer missed the tour's first date in Aberdeen, Scotland, a Clash spokesman appealed to him via the press to come back. When the singer returned nearly a month later (he had been in Paris), he used the occasion for a big move: He had grown exhausted with Headon's promises to overcome his drug problem. Strummer called a meeting of band and told the drummer, "You're sacked." Headon later said, "I admit I lost track of what was going on, but I think we all did. Everyone was fucked up, whether it was drugs or drink." Headon's problems grew worse for years – he was massively in debt to drug dealers; he broke a leg and claimed amnesia after falling through a motorcycle-garage skylight (during what police suspected was a robbery attempt); and in the late 1980s, he served a 15-month sentence for supplying heroin to a man who overdosed and died. In 1998, Headon was so severely injured in a car accident that he was declared dead on arrival at the hospital; he recovered, to learn he had hepatitis C. Strummer would later admit that losing Headon had been a severe blow to the Clash. "I don't think we played a good gig after that," he told Salewicz. Jones had never liked Strummer's decision. "I wouldn't have sacked anybody," he said.

The Clash persuaded Terry Chimes to rejoin them for their 1982 tour, which culminated in the band opening for the Who at several autumn stadium dates. As *Live at Shea Stadium* attests, the Clash – even without Headon – were still a superb performing band. But conflicts between the group's ideals and the reality of its mass success, plus rancor, were taking a steady toll. In May 1983, the band (now with Pete Howard on drums) appeared before its largest audience – an estimated 200,000 people – at the Us Festival, a four-day event outside Los Angeles organized by Apple Computers co-founder Steve Wozniak. Before Rhodes would allow the Clash to play, though, he goaded them into unnecessarily admonishing Wozniak for greed (the Clash received \$500,000 [Cont. on 79]



**COMBAT ROCK** Joe Strummer, Mick Jones and Paul Simonon (from left) in Philadelphia on September 25th, 1982, the day of their JFK Stadium tour opener with the Who

others an ultimatum: If the Clash wanted him to remain, they would have to rehire Bernard Rhodes. ("I made Joe great," Rhodes told Chris Salewicz. "I knew how it worked.") Mick Jones was stunned. He despised Rhodes, and he felt the band had flourished creatively without him, but Strummer had left him with no options. "I could quite easily have walked out then," Jones later said. "But it's like a marriage or the people you love: You cling on, hoping it's going to work." It was during this period that Jones began growing distant within the band, keeping his own hours, enjoying live performances less. It was also a time in which drummer Topper Headon was running into serious difficulties. His extraordinary talents had been essential to the band's musical growth. But early on, he had taken to reckless drunken behavior, and then along the way developed a heroin habit. In 1979, while in Lubbock, Texas, for a show, the drummer nearly overdosed,

said. Yet overall, the event had a tremendous effect: It hoisted the Clash to headline news repeatedly, in one of the most important cities in the world.

Back in London, Strummer wanted the band to make a more accessible album, with a sound closer to its first effort. Jones, though, wanted the Clash to return to New York, to pursue a more technological and funk-infused direction. Communications became so uncomfortable that the songwriting partners took to collaborating through the mail, and at one session, Strummer drew a chalk line on the floor, dividing himself from Jones. After Mick Jones thought he had a final version of the album, Strummer rejected the effort. "Mick, I don't think you can produce," he said. "You bastard," Jones replied. "I thought you were my friend." Rhodes brought in Glyn Johns – who had worked in the war zone of the Beatles around the *Let It Be* sessions – to edit and mix tapes.



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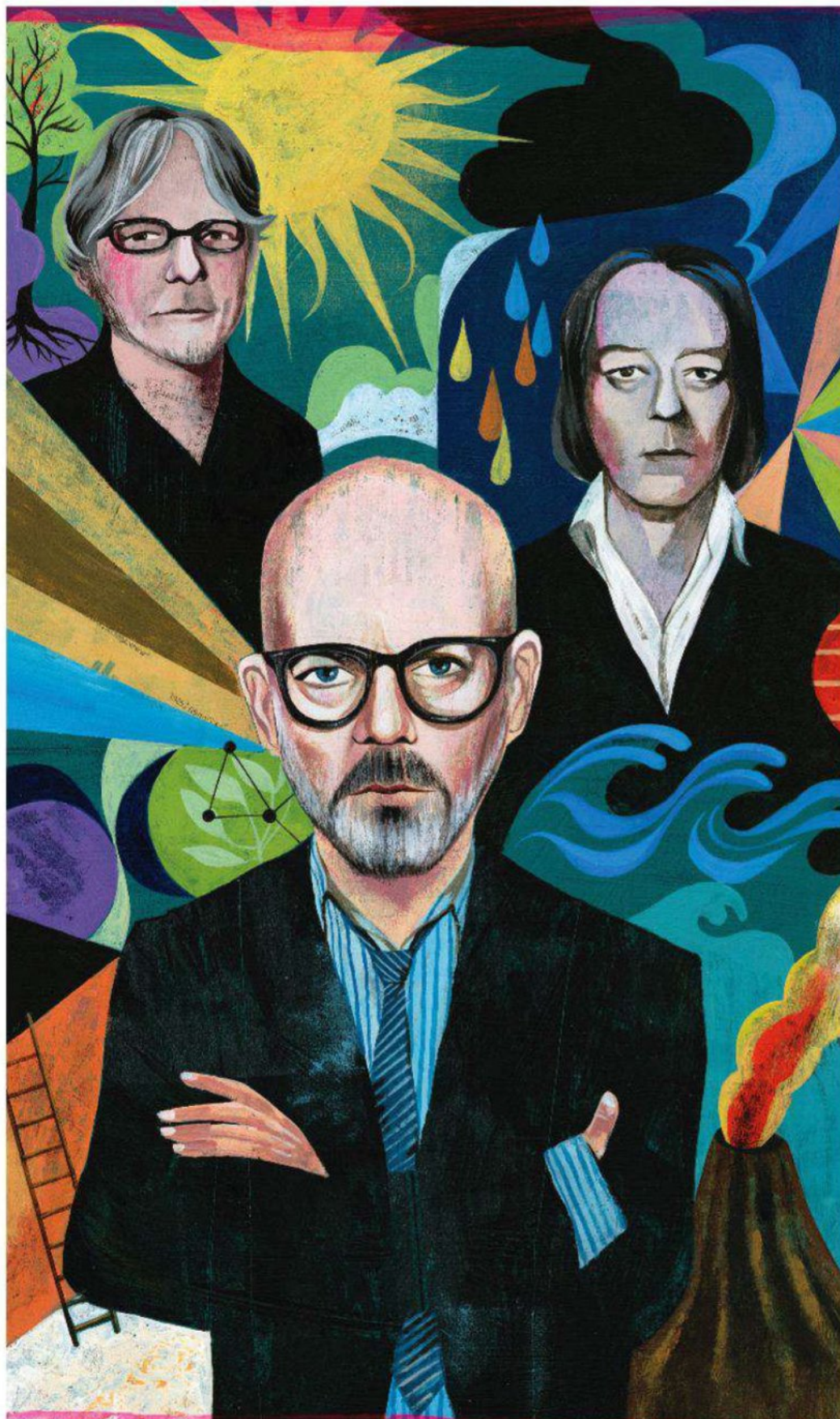
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# Reviews

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**R.E.M. make a beautiful mess – and remind you why you loved them**

**R.E.M. ★★★★★**

**Collapse Into Now**  
Warner Bros.

BY ROB SHEFFIELD



For anyone wondering what Michael Stipe wants after all these years, Stipe has chosen R.E.M.'s 15th album as the place to run down his wish list. "I want Whitman proud!" he declares in the superb finale, "Blue." "I want Patti Lee proud," meaning old friend Patti Smith, who's there in the studio making gorgeously guttural noises. "I want my brothers proud," probably meaning Peter Buck and Mike Mills, who cut loose with a country-feedback guitar groove. "I want my sisters proud! I want me! I want it all! I want sensational, irresistible! This is my time, and I am thrilled to be alive!" And he sounds it.

Smith suggested the title *Collapse Into Now*, which could be an answer to her heartbreaking memoir from last year, *Just Kids*. Except instead of scruffy young bohemians hustling to make it, it's a portrait of full-grown artists who reached the top long ago but decided to stick together and ride out the decades. You can hear a lot of shared history in the music, but you can also hear conflict, confusion, doubt – exactly the kind of recipe that R.E.M. thrive on. Just kids? That was the easy part.

*Collapse Into Now* is the first truly messy album R.E.M. have made in 10 years, since their underrated 2001 gem, *Reveal*. Their recent albums



have focused on one musical approach at a time: 2004's *Around the Sun* was all slow-motion torpor, and 2008's excellent *Accelerate* went for spiky rockers. But *Collapse Into Now* touches on all their favorite tricks: punk raves, stately ballads, piano, accordion and the most mandolin they've put in one place since "Losing My Religion."

Guitar god Buck shines on *Collapse*, whether he's going for psychedelic buzz ("Me, Marlon Brando, Marlon Brando and I") or power-chord thump ("Mine Smell Like Honey"). Multi-instrumentalist Mills adds his always-essential voice; "All the Best" shows why his backup vocals are as key to R.E.M. as Michael Anthony's are to Van Halen. Eddie Vedder guests on "It Happened Today," and though it's not clear who the hell invited Peaches, she sounds fine beside Lenny Kaye's guitar on "Alligator Aviator Autopilot Antimatter."

Stipe isn't as emotionally expressive as he was on *Accelerate* and *Reveal* – you wish he'd get into a mood now and then, even if it's just one of his surly spells. He's best when he decides to stop trying so hard – as in the two-minute goof "That Someone Is You," where the band rocks out as Stipe rhymes "Sharon Stone Casino," "Scarface Al Pacino" and "74 Torino."

It's been 30 years since these Georgia boys released their debut indie single, "Radio Free Europe"/"Sitting Still," which basically invented everything halfway interesting that guitar bands have done ever since. They long ago passed the point where they're beloved just for continuing to exist. But on *Collapse Into Now*, they sound like they'd rather be a band than a legend, which must be why they keep pushing on. Who knows if Whitman or Patti Smith is proud – but R.E.M. should be.

**Key Tracks:** "Discoverer," "Blue," "Oh My Heart"



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# Adele Toughens Up Her Soul

The British diva leaves the jazz lounge and takes over the world

Adele ★★★★★<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

21 XL/Columbia

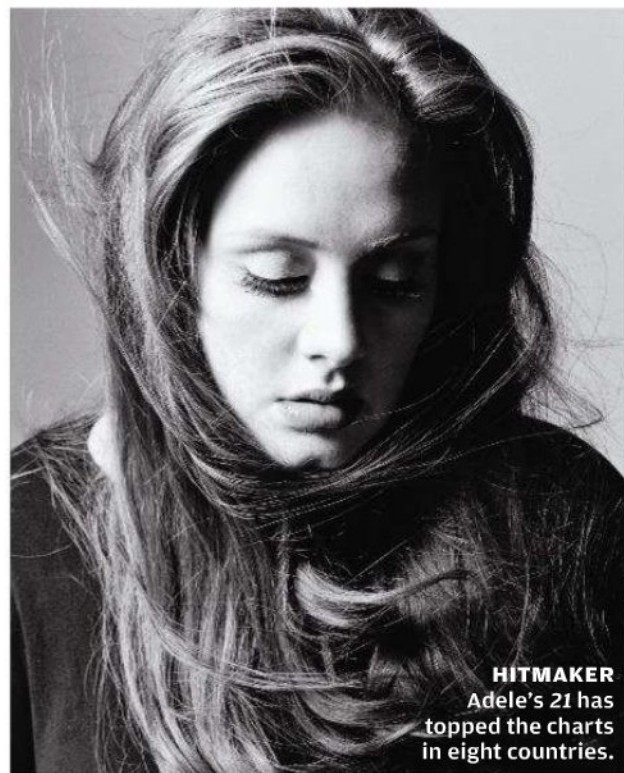


Adele Adkins' retro-soul debut, *21*, was striking less for her songs than for that voice: a voluptuous, slightly parched alto that swooped and fluttered like a Dusty Springfield student trying to upstage her teacher, or at least update the rules. Now that she's legal – *21* refers to her age when she wrote these songs – Adele has toughened her tone, trimmed the jazz frippery and sounds ready for a pub fight. "Go ahead and sell me out/And I'll lay your shit bare," she promises an ex-lover on "Rolling in the Deep," a soul burner with hand claps and a kick drum whumping like a fist on a sandbag. (The new approach seems to be working: *21* has already topped the charts in eight countries.)

The A-list hitmakers are here: Paul Epworth (Kate Nash, Cee Lo Green), Ryan Tedder (Beyoncé, Kelly Clarkson), Dan Wilson (Dixie Chicks), Fraser T. Smith (Taio Cruz). Adele has real chemistry with Epworth; check his old-school/new-school magic act on the R&B co-write "He Won't Go," which gets some lean production from Rick Rubin. She clicks less with Wilson, whose power ballads (excepting the gospel-powered "One and Only") try too hard. The woman is mutable, sometimes to a fault: Her cover of the Cure's "Lovesong" is a nice idea lost in bossa nova fluff. But when the grooves are fierce, Adele gives as good as she gets.

WILL HERMES

**Key Tracks:** "Rolling in the Deep," "One and Only"



**HITMAKER**  
Adele's *21* has topped the charts in eight countries.

## Lykke Li ★★★★★

Wounded Rhymes LL

Young Swede delivers warped Sixties-pop majesty



Ever since Abba went global, Sweden has been a pop paradise, a factory of mathematically perfect hooks. Lykke Li is a different kind of Swedish wunderkind: an ingenious oddball. Her second album is a weird-pop gem – torchy love songs that nod to Sixties hits but are stretched into all kinds of shapes. Li dips into garage rock and wintry folk, but her guiding spirit seems to be Phil Spector, and she laces the music with booming percussion and girl-group-style romantic melodrama. Li is no revivalist. "I Follow Rivers" places her neo-Shangri-Las sentiments ("He the rebel/I'm the daughter") against an eerie swirl of synths, reverb-swathed guitars and pinging electronic percussion. As for all the catchy tunes: That's just a Swede, exercising her birthright.

JODY ROSEN

**Key Tracks:** "I Follow Rivers," "Jerome"

## Middle Brother

★★★★★<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

Middle Brother *Partisan*

Alt-country supergroup makes excellently boozy racket



This singer-songwriter summit – John McCauley of Deer Tick, Dawes' Taylor Goldsmith, Delta Spirit's Matthew Vasquez – is an alt-country round robin, with raw harmonies and punk-rock sentiment as unforgiving as a prison shiv. "I know my days are numbered, but I'm bad at math/I got a dick so hard that a cat couldn't scratch," howls McCauley on "Middle Brother." Half the songs on *Middle Brother* involve drinking and the rest hangovers of the heart, and on Paul Westerberg's "Portland," everyone chimes in on the line "It's too late to turn back, here we gooooo" – they're certain of trouble ahead, and relishing it.

W.H.

**Key Tracks:** "Middle Brother," "Portland"



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# TOP SINGLES

## Das Racist

★★★★ "Swate" *Leaked*

Six heavy-lidded minutes of Bollywood-steeped wisecracking from Brooklyn's reigning rap ironists. They reference Marxist theorist Slavoj Žižek as casually as most rappers reference cheeba. They also reference cheeba.

JON DOLAN

## The Pains of Being Pure at Heart

★★★★ "Belong" *Leaked*

The jangly rockers pump themselves into shoegazing superheroes on the title track of their new LP. Credit for the tidal-wave guitars is partly due to the production team of Flood and Alan Moulder, who recall the latter's own work with My Bloody Valentine. Hail the Nineties revival!

WILL HERMES

## Timbaland feat. Brandy

★★★½ "808"

*timbalandthursdays.com*

A month into his track-a-week "Timbaland Thursdays" series, Timbo already seems stretched thin. "808" is Timboilerplate: some kind words for his favorite drum machine, a few breaths of Brandy and a bland skitter beat.

J.D.

## Erykah Badu

★★★★½

"Gone Baby, Don't Be Long"

*vimeo.com*

Director Flying Lotus creates an alien landscape where Badu fits in just fine. Watching the soul queen's visage glide around a trippy animated spaceship is nearly as hypnotic as listening to the breezily funk-out music.

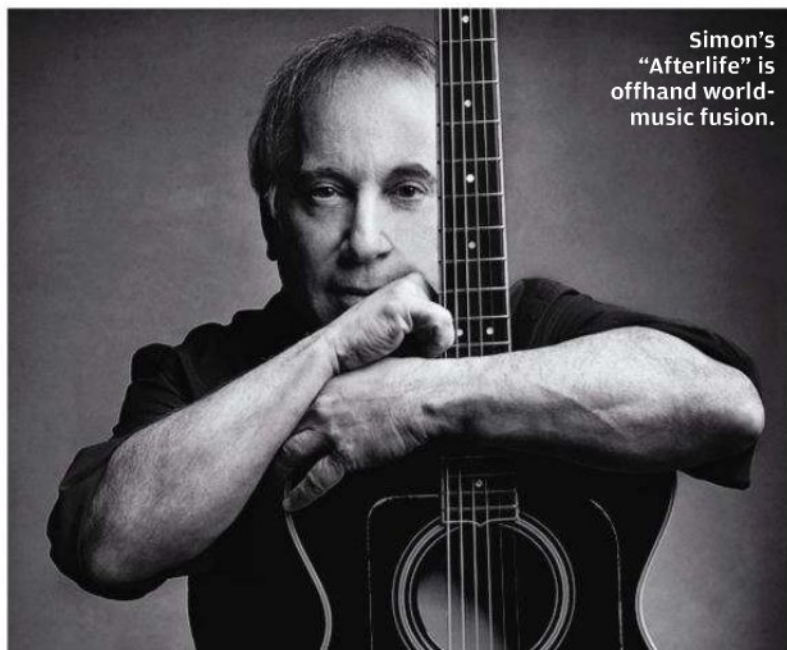
ERIC MAGNUSON



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Simon's "Afterlife" is offhand world-music fusion.

## Paul Simon Heads Back to 'Graceland'

Paul Simon ★★★★★ "The Afterlife" *paulsimon.com*

The narrative wit is sharp on the second track from Paul Simon's forthcoming *So Beautiful or So What* (due in April): Some dude gets to heaven, fills out forms, waits in line, and tries, unsuccessfully, to mack on some girl. And when it comes time to explain his mortal life to the Almighty, he can only splutter rock & roll gibberish. "Lord, is it 'be bop a lula'?" the unnamed sap implores. "Or 'ooo papa doo'?" Packed with internal rhymes,

Simon's verses flow like butter over supple lines by Cameroonian guitar master Vincent Nguini and Jim Oblon's syncopated grooves. Simon says *So Beautiful or So What* reminds him of his sparsely produced solo debut, 1972's *Paul Simon*. But in its mix of wry, mellow pop and African guitars, "The Afterlife" echoes *Graceland*. It's world-music fusion that's as offhandedly awesome as a kimchi hot dog.

W.H.

## Fleet Foxes' Sweet Dreams

Fleet Foxes ★★★★★ "Helplessness Blues"

*fleetfoxes.com*

The first fruit from *Helplessness Blues*, the Seattle folk rockers' upcoming second album, this two-part meditation begins with frontman Robin Pecknold sounding like a troubled Joni Mitchell and ends with him sounding like a utopian Graham Nash. Pecknold wrestles with life's meaning over vigorous acoustic strumming before the Foxes' trademark harmonies explode amid electric-guitar scribbles and Pecknold's daydreams about working at an orchard. An amputated couplet appropriately ends the song—dreams are like that.

W.H.

## The Kills: Now Even Freakier

The Kills ★★★★★½ "Satellite" *Leaked*

This scuzz-loving blues-punk duo were on hiatus while singer Alison Mosshart howled alongside Jack White in the Dead Weather. Now they're back with bad vibes to burn—and an even more wicked sound. On "Satellite," Mosshart and singer-guitarist Jamie Hince writhe over corrosive guitar skronk, a loping dub-reggae groove and a spooky-ooky goth-gospel choir. The lyrics seem to be about a booty call thwarted by crappy cellphone service ("Operator, operator, dial her back..."), but the Kills make them sound like an SOS from hell.

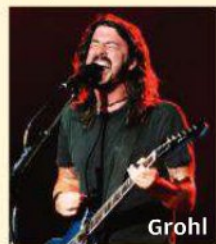
J.D.

## BOOTLEG

### Foo Fighters

The Roxy, Los Angeles, February 7th

"Do you guys want to hear the new record?" Dave Grohl asked as the Foo Fighters took the stage for a surprise show at the tiny Roxy in Los Angeles. As the crowd roared, the group kicked into the ferocious "Bridge Burning," from the Foos' upcoming seventh LP—which the band played in its entirety. Grohl has described the still-untitled record (which the band cut with *Nevermind* producer Butch Vig) as "our heaviest album yet"—and the blaring material translates well to the stage. By the time the Foos had played the whole album, however, the crowd was yearning for something familiar. So Grohl and company turned the show



Grohl

into a Foos retrospective. Massive singles like "My Hero" and "Everlong" have aged well, while "Monkey Wrench" sounds better than ever with third guitarist Pat Smear back in the band. "Los Angeles, some people think you're a tough crowd. I think it's fucking bullshit," said Grohl, before launching into "Up in Arms." After months behind the drum kit with Them Crooked Vultures, you can imagine Grohl relishes being out front again—and it certainly sounds that way. **ANDY GREENE**



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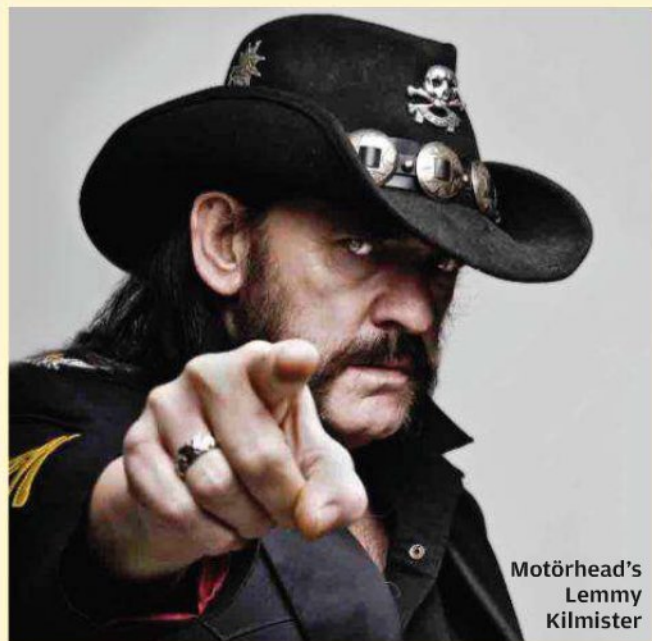
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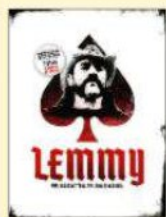
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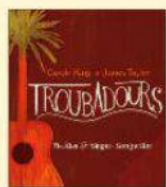
Motörhead's  
Lemmy  
Kilmister



### Lemmy: 49% Motherf\*\*ker. 51% Son of a Bitch. ★★

Damage Case Films/Megaforce

Though the title of this intimate documentary might suggest that the Motörhead vocalist-bassist is a mean bastard, Ian "Lemmy" Kilmister comes across here as a soft-spoken and agreeable guy – albeit one who drinks, smokes and gambles constantly and lives in a Hollywood apartment packed with Nazi memorabilia. Lemmy is rarely as meaningful as the essential metal doc *Anvil* because we never see the thrash pioneer in conflict: Rockers from Metallica's James Hetfield to Alice Cooper pay tribute, but only members of his previous band Hawkwind say anything critical (and that's mostly to admit Lemmy's taste for speed clashed with their interest in LSD). At 117 minutes (plus three hours of bonus features), the fawning gets redundant, while his life's defining moments, like the heroin-induced death of an early girlfriend, get lost. **BARRY WALTERS**



### Troubadours: The Rise of the Singer-Songwriter

★★★½ Hear Music/Concord Music Group

Framed by songs from the reunited Carole King/James Taylor team, this doc captures the glory days of the 1970s singer-songwriter movement, whose epicenter was Hollywood's Troubadour nightclub. The film, airing on PBS' *American Masters*, is heavy on vintage concert footage (like Taylor performing "Fire and Rain" six months before *Sweet Baby James* came out) and famous commentators – including Steve Martin, who was there during Elton John's nearly empty Troubadour debut in 1970, quipping, "This guy's really good. Too bad he can't draw any people." **B.W.**



### Billy Joel: Live at Shea Stadium ★★

Columbia/Legacy

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the last two concerts at this historic New York venue is that Billy Joel left out his biggest hits – no "Tell Her About It," no "Just the Way You Are." Instead, Joel filled these 2008 shows with his best songs, including early fan favorites like "The Ballad of Billy the Kid." Backed by a massive and energetic band, Joel's lung power sounds diminished, but he invites famous friends to assist: Paul McCartney, Steven Tyler, Roger Daltrey and John Mellencamp stop by to belt out their songs, and Tony Bennett sings the tough parts of "New York State of Mind." **B.W.**

### Thin Lizzy

★★★★★

REISSUE

Jailbreak (Deluxe Edition)

Mercury/UMe

1976 twin-guitar classic with "The Boys Are Back in Town"



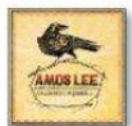
Fronted by a biracial Irish rake who wanted to be Jimi Hendrix and Van Morrison at the same time – singer-bassist-songwriter Phil Lynott – Thin Lizzy took six years and as many studio albums to hone their Celtic-cowboy power blues into the twin-guitar super-rock of 1976's *Jailbreak*. The title blast, the hit single "The Boys Are Back in Town" and the riff-warrior battle "Emerald" are Lynott and Lizzy at their swaggering peak, while 1976's *Johnny the Fox*, also reissued, is nearly as good. Both come with bonus BBC sessions, outtakes and new remixes (co-produced by Def Leppard's Joe Elliott) that are, surprisingly, not heresy – just brighter and louder. **DAVID FRICKE**

**Key Tracks:** "The Boys Are Back in Town," "Emerald"

### Amos Lee ★★

Mission Bell EMI/Blue Note

Soul prodigy dines with country elders



Amos Lee is an evanescent soul man. The 33-year-old's voice blends James Taylor and Bill Withers, but his singing sometimes feels anonymous, his persona dissolving into a tasteful mix of predictable lyrics and buttery timbres. For that reason, like his label-mate Norah Jones, Lee is a great foil, and the standouts on his chart-topping fourth album – cut with Joey Burns of Western-mystic indie rockers Calexico providing moody backup – are the cameo tracks. Lucinda Williams is a trembling lover on "Clear Blue Eyes." And on "Behind Me Now/El Camino (Reprise)," Willie Nelson drops in for a duet that's whiskey and cool water: a perfect mix. **WILL HERMES**

**Key Tracks:** "Clear Blue Eyes," "Behind Me Now/El Camino (Reprise)"

### The Low Anthem

★★★★★

Smart Flesh Nonesuch

Rustic Rhode Islanders are sublimely bummed out



This Rhode Island band plays despairing songs at crippled-spirit speed, in stridently antique tones: long sighs of pump organ; the soprano warble of a bowed saw; the rusted-Leonard Cohen whisper of singer-songwriter Ben Knox Miller. *Smart Flesh* is also magnificent sadness. The Low Anthem render the ghosts and damaged souls in these songs with delicate precision – the swirling pedal steel guitar in "Apothecary Love," the pregnant spaces and sternly strummed banjo in "I'll Take Out Your Ashes" – steeped in echo. It's as if the Band stripped their prairie-gothic majesty down to Tom Waits' early barfly essentials. There are few happy endings here, but the wounded have plenty of room to roam and waltz. **D.F.**

**Key Tracks:** "Apothecary Love," "I'll Take Out Your Ashes"

### The Script ★★½

Science & Faith Epic

Irish guys go for the gut with hip-hop and boozy rock



"I'm standing under a white flag," sings Danny O'Donoghue, positing his Dublin trio as inheritors to the Emerald Isle's greatest band. The Script have enjoyed Euro-chart success with a mix of lite rock, rap rock and Guinness-informed crooning they call "Celtic soul" – at once soaring, melancholic and treacly. Their second disc's big ballad is "For the First Time," about boozing your way through Ireland's recession. But if O'Donoghue references locally, he thinks globally; B.o.B lends verses to the piano-drenched "Walk Away," and O'Donoghue shifts from singing to raps that could come from an American kid who wouldn't know County Kerry from Katy Perry. **JON DOLAN**

**Key Tracks:** "For the First Time," "This = Love"



## Elvis Presley

★★★★½

REISSUE

Elvis Is Back!

Legacy Edition RCA/Legacy

1960 comeback shows soldier with something to prove



Recorded when Presley was 25, fresh off a two-year military stint and musically fit to burst, *Elvis Is Back!* might be the King's greatest noncompilation LP: wildly varied material, revelatory singing, impeccable stereo sound. This reissue includes other period singles (check out the crazily operatic 1961 hit "Surrender") and the entire follow-up album, *Something for Everybody*. Yes, it's the beginning of schmaltzy Elvis; see the spoken-word bathos of "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" Yet even there, the hook melodrama is dazzling. And when he rocks the hard-on blues "It Feels So Right," dude sounds like he could convert a nunnery.

WILL HERMES

**Key Tracks:** "It Feels So Right," "Surrender"

## Dropkick Murphys

★★★★½

Going Out in Style *Born & Bred*

Celtic punks wild out with help from Springsteen



"No mercy, no quarter," bellow the Dropkick Murphys in the raucous opener of their seventh album, a phrase that sums up their philosophy of music (and drinking). The Boston Irish-punk septet never met a shout-along chorus they didn't want to crash into, with a bagpipe tooting along for an extra shot of old-world poignancy. *Going Out in Style*, a theme album about a fictional Irish-American named Cornelius Larkin, veers into tears-in-your-pint sentimentality on ballads like "1953." But reservations disappear at the sound of full-fathom burner "Peg o' My Heart," a sweet, boozy love song with guest vocals by another guy who takes no quarter: Bruce Springsteen.

JODY ROSEN

**Key Tracks:** "Peg o' My Heart," "Memorial Day," "Hang 'Em High"

## James Blake

★★★★½ James Blake *Universal/Republic*

English phenom combines Radiohead and gorgeous soul



British dance-music subgenres don't usually produce soulful singer-songwriters – there was no Marvin Gaye of grime, no Joni Mitchell of jungle. But in James Blake, the squish-grooved London club throb called dubstep has got its very own emotive song stylist. Blake uses neosoul keyboards, blip beats and layered snips of his heart-starved warbling to create eerie, softly roiling slow-jams. Like Radiohead, Blake's sonic empty spaces highlight human distance: His cover of Feist's "The Limit to Your Love" dangles lyrics about a dying relationship above trip-hop fizz, and when Blake finally inches toward happiness on "The Wilhelm Scream," he makes finding true love sound like entering a void. "All that I know is I'm falling," he sings over a swirl of black digitalia. Yep, falling right into the mystic.

JON DOLAN

Stream James Blake at [rollingstone.com](http://rollingstone.com).



DJ-turned-singer Blake

### KEY FACTS

**Hometown** London

**Backstory**

22-year-old music student blends piano training and dubstep beats on genius remixes of Snoop Dogg and Lil Wayne, releases his own startlingly subtle EPs. U.K. hype storm ensues.

**Sounds Like**

Starkly beautiful slow-jams full of empty spaces and pale crooning.

**Overseas Help**

Blake, a former DJ, credits American folkies like Bon Iver for inspiring him to pick up the mic.

## Nicole Atkins

★★★★

Mondo Amore *Razor & Tie*

Dreaminess and drama from a big-voiced Jersey girl



Nicole Atkins' second album is an exercise in what you might call brunch blues: dreamy, vaguely melancholic, thoroughly pleasant. The New Jersey-born singer-songwriter has a forceful and unfussy singing style that brings welcome drama to sleepy Fifties throwbacks like "This Is for Love" and rises to a wail on more agitated, roots-rock-inflected numbers like "Vultures" and "You Come to Me." Atkins' lyrics describe insatiable wanderlust and the travails of getting involved with no-good dudes – she falls for one on "Cry Cry Cry" and offers others hyperspecific advice on "Hotel Plaster." "Don't shake the change out of your pockets in the boudoir," she instructs. Noted!

JONAH WEINER

**Key Tracks:** "Cry Cry Cry," "This Is for Love," "Vultures"

## Game

★★★★½

Purp & Patron

*purpandpatron.com*

L.A. rapper finally loosens up on star-studded mixtape



*Purp & Patron* offers fans of Game something they've never quite experienced from him: fun. The 50 Cent protégé-turned-adversary has always been a pugnacious, sharp-witted MC. He's also been a bit of a downer – solid but stolid, a rapper who is easy to admire but hard to love. But on this sprawling, 29-song mixtape, Game drops his perma-scowl, rapping an ode to his Chuck Taylors and rocking with some of hip-hop's most glorious goofballs (Doug E. Fresh, Lil Wayne, Snoop). The beats, by everyone from the Neptunes to Dr. Dre, are taut and funky, but Game's charisma holds center stage. "I'm more famous than Amos," he boasts, "taking cookies from these rookies."

J.R.

**Key Tracks:** "Taylor Made," "Childrens Story"

## Toro y Moi

★★★★

Underneath the Pine *Carpark*

Chillwave dude fleshes out his sound, with hypnotic results



Last year, the debut from Toro y Moi (real name: Chaz Bundick) tipped him as one of the leading purveyors of "chillwave" – woozy, low-fi, sample-based electronic music for a post-Animal Collective generation. But for his follow-up, Bundick decided to use only organic, live instrumentation. The results are groovier and prettier, touching on baroque pop ("Before I'm Done"), slinky disco ("New Beat") and psych rock ("Good Hold," "How I Know"). Bundick tosses in interludes like "Divina," where the swirl of instruments mimics his debut's hypnotic feel. As Bundick reveals more of his esoteric pop sensibility, comparisons to Beck feel increasingly apt. Whatever wave Bundick is riding, he's likely to be at the front of it. JENNY ELISCU

**Key Tracks:** "Before I'm Done," "How I Know"





**TAKEN FOR A RIDE**  
January Jones  
nuzzles a confused  
Liam Neeson.

# Sex, Lies and Amnesia

**Taken's Liam Neeson gets taken again in a mesmerizing mind-bender** By Peter Travers

## Unknown

★★★½

Liam Neeson, January Jones, Frank Langella

**Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra**

DON'T TELL ME THAT THE brainteasing thriller *Unknown* is unworthy of Hitchcock. State the obvious much? But ignore the pileup of implausibilities and *Unknown* becomes a diabolically entertaining con game. Does it jerk you around? Yes. Suck it up. The ride's worth it.

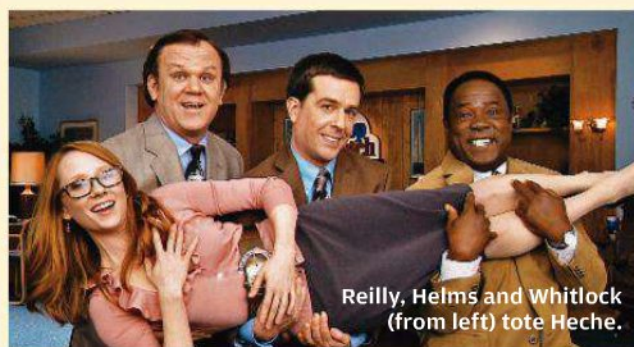
From the moment Liam Neeson, as Dr. Martin Harris, arrives in a rainy, seductively dangerous Berlin for a biotech conference, I was hooked. Not by the conference – biotech, puh-leeze! What drew me in during the limo ride from the airport was the va-voom Betty Draper blonde nuzzling Martin in the back seat. That's his wife, Elizabeth, played by January Jones with the same opaque sexiness that makes mad men of us all.

Before Martin and the mis-sus can check into a chic hotel for erotic grapplings that are shown in flashback, Martin must rush back to the airport for a briefcase he left behind. Really? Really! Look, I said,

go with it or drop out now. As plot manipulation would have it, Martin's taxi is being driven by another hottie, Gina (Diane Kruger), who swerves to avoid an accident and drops into a river, where Martin suffers a head injury. After four days of amnesia, he rushes back to wifey only to find her clinging to another guy (Aidan Quinn), who says he's Martin. WTF?

In 2008's surprise hit *Taken*, Neeson spent the movie kicking the ass of baddies trying to sell his daughter into white slavery. In *Unknown*, Neeson kicks ass to save himself from identity theft. Not as sexy, but the script keeps springing surprises (I'll never tell), and director Jaume Collet-Serra gives the action a slick-dick gloss worthy of every ad he ever shot for PlayStation or Budweiser.

Neeson brings gravitas and sneaky wit to his role. He's a star with something extra. His scenes with Kruger, the glam spy of *Inglourious Basterds*, sizzle. And watching him play cat-and-mouse with acting giants Frank Langella and Bruno Ganz as men you maybe shouldn't trust is a genuine bonus. *Unknown* makes it fun to be fooled, even if you hate yourself in the morning.



Reilly, Helms and Whitlock  
(from left) tote Heche.

## Cedar Rapids ★★★

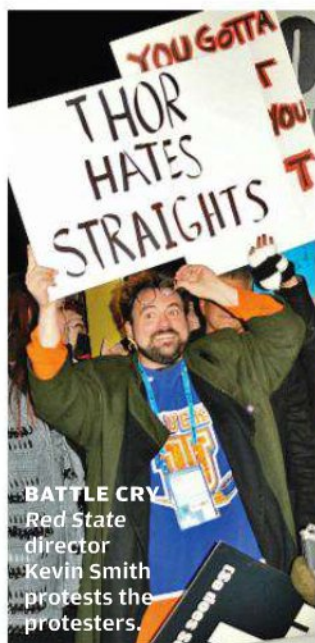
Ed Helms, Anne Heche **Directed by Miguel Arteta**

A modest comedy that springs indecently funny surprises, *Cedar Rapids* drops Midwestern insurance hustlers into a sales conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It's whoo-hoo time for Tim Lippe (Ed Helms), a Wisconsin man-child getting his first taste of bright lights, big city. It sounds like a recipe for cheap, condescending gags. Thanks to a tartly observed script by Phil Johnston and direction from the gifted Miguel Arteta that stays attuned to the sadness and pain that seep in between the cracks, *Cedar Rapids* is both hilarious and heartfelt. It's also powered by a dream cast, led by the outstanding Helms. The scene-stealer of *The Office* and *The Hangover*

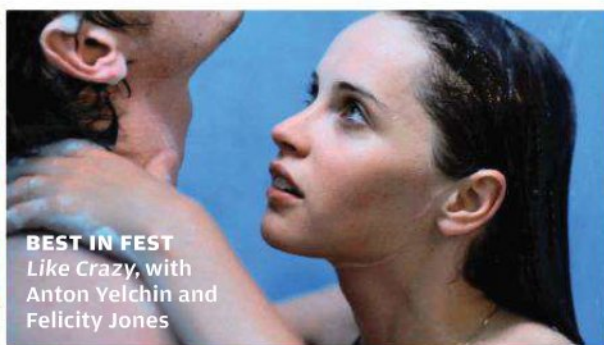
turns the hapless Lippe into someone to root for. Lippe is rooming with two sales reps, amiable Ronald (*The Wire*'s Isiah Whitlock Jr. is a deadpan delight) and party animal Deansie (John C. Reilly in a nonstop-laugh zone). Adding spice is Joan Ostrowski-Fox (Anne Heche), who uses the conference to forget – for a weekend – the husband and kids she adores. It's a complex, morally tricky role, and Heche plays it with fire and feeling – she's a knockout. The plot is a race to win an award that requires ass-kissing the Christian right. But it's the characters who provide liftoff. *Cedar Rapids* had me smiling at hello. As Deansie might say of such comic gold, "It's the tits."



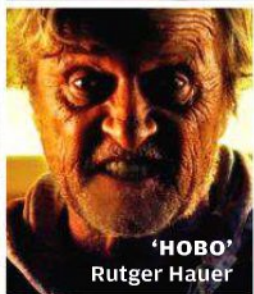
# SUNDANCE 2011



**BATTLE CRY**  
Red State  
director  
Kevin Smith  
protests the  
protesters.



**BEST IN FEST**  
*Like Crazy*, with  
Anton Yelchin and  
Felicity Jones



**'HOBO'**  
Rutger Hauer



**NEW STAR**  
Elizabeth  
Olsen, Martha  
Marcy May  
Marlene

## Hot Deals & It Girls

Robert Redford's film fest scores big on art and commerce

**BULL MARKET** At Sundance 2011, movies found buyers as if the financial crisis never happened. More than two dozen features and docs were marked **SOLD**. The Weinstein Co. forked over \$8 million for *The Details*, with Tobey Maguire, and \$6 million for *My Idiot Brother*, with Paul Rudd. But even films minus star insurance won pickups. Focus paid less than \$1 million for Dee Rees' wonderful *Pariah*, about a lesbian teen coming out, and Fox Searchlight made a similar investment in Mike Cahill's provocative *Another Earth*, about love on a mirror planet. Cold cash also went for crap, such as the pandering, TV-ish *The Ledge* (that's right, there's a jumper out there). But mostly, it was money well spent on a banner crop of Sundance movies.

**GOLDEN RING** The Grand Jury Prize for drama went to Drake Doremus' *Like Crazy*, a crazily inventive and totally irresistible tale of first love that makes the familiar seem heart-stoppingly new. Anton Yelchin excels as the L.A. college boy who falls hard for a London exchange student, played by the magical Felicity Jones, who won a rare Jury Prize for acting. Sundance couldn't get enough of Jones. You won't either.

**KEVIN SMITH STRIKES BACK** Labeled batshit nutso by the blogosphere for taking his horror movie *Red State* to Sundance for a post-screening auction, and then selling it to himself for 20 bucks, Smith had the last laugh. Or at least he should. Having to market his own film, a wrenching and rabidly funny attack on the homophobic gospel of Pastor Fred Phelps,

Smith protested his protesters with signs that mocked their idiot gay-bashing. He also decided to take *Red State* out on a 16-city tour, starting at Manhattan's Radio City Music Hall on March 5th, spreading the word about his hot-potato film with follow-up Q&As that promise to be as entertaining as his sellout tours, which often last as long as Springsteen concerts. Crazy? Smells like indie spirit to me.

**"IT" GIRLS** Let's start with Elizabeth Olsen, younger sister of those famous twins, who gives an electrifying, star-is-born performance in Sean Durkin's *Martha Marcy May Marlene* as a girl who escapes a cult. And sound the trumpets for amazing Brit Marling, a double threat as actress and co-writer in Cahill's riveting *Another Earth* and Zal Batmangli's potent psychodrama *Sound of My Voice*.

**MIDNIGHT FUN** Sundance witching-hour screenings hit pay dirt with Rutger Hauer packing heat in Jason Eisener's *Hobo With a Shotgun*, best title of the fest after *Codependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same*.

**PERSONAL FAVES** After *Like Crazy*, I go with Rees' *Pariah* and its luminous star Adepero Oduye; Elgin James' *Little Birds*, in which the filmmaker sees himself in an outlaw teen girl (a dynamite Juno Temple); and Susanne Rostock's indelibly moving *Sing Your Song*, a doc about the political activism that never stops stirring singer-actor Harry Belafonte. At 83, Belafonte emerged as the most vital voice at a young festival. Listen and learn.

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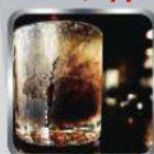
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## THE CLASH

[Cont. from 67] for performing under a banner that read THE CLASH NOT FOR SALE). As the Clash left the stage, the day's ill will reached its peak in a fistfight between band members and the festival's stage crew. It was the last show the original members of the Clash – Mick Jones, Paul Simonon and Joe Strummer – played together.

Strummer had continued to feel that Jones was somehow failing the band. "Mick was intolerable to work with by this time," he said in *Westway to the World*. "When he did show up, it was like Elizabeth Taylor in a filthy mood." In August 1983, Strummer called a band meeting. "How have you enjoyed the last seven years?" he asked Jones. "I think it's time for a parting of the ways." Mick was sure this was Rhodes' doing. "I asked the band who they wanted, Bernie or me," Jones later said. "The group said they wanted Bernie, and then just looked at the floor. I couldn't believe my ears. I stood there for about 10 seconds, stunned. Then I just picked up my guitar and walked out." Perhaps even Bernard Rhodes had been unprepared for the finality and brutality of the moment. He rushed after Jones and offered him a check. "Like a gold watch – which added insult to injury," Jones recalled. "But I took it anyway."

THE CLASH TRIED TO LUMBER on. Rhodes and Strummer recruited new members (Pete Howard stayed on drums; Vince White and Nick Sheppard joined on guitars and vocals), but there was no equanimity in the resulting lineup. Rhodes berated the new members regularly, in what Sheppard described as "dehumanizing sessions." When Strummer was around, he failed to intervene. Observers thought he seemed intimidated by Rhodes. "I went into the situation thinking the Clash is a humanitarian band," Vince White later said. "But the reality is the complete opposite."

Strummer's commitment to the Clash now seemed sporadic; he was dealing with more preoccupying matters. His father, Ronald Mellor, died of a heart attack in early 1984, and then his mother fell ill. When Strummer appeared for rehearsals or performances, he said nothing about this to others. "There was a point," Mick Jones told Chris Salewicz, "when you got right down to it and you couldn't quite go past. . . . Years later, I casually asked one day, 'How's your mum?' We're in a loo somewhere, having a piss, and he says, 'She's got cancer.' There was stuff like that all inside. Really shocking even to look at." As Anna Mellor was dying, Strummer sat at her bedside, but he also took her to task for the time she and his father had left him and his brother, David, at boarding school. Later, Strummer would say that he'd regretted not having come to better

terms with his father before Ronald Mellor's death. He now understood that, like his father, he gave himself to work, to paying attention to the world, more readily than to familial bonds. In reproaching his mother, Strummer was trying to wrest some sort of hard-won reconciliation before it was too late. He nonetheless visited regularly in her last months, sometimes bringing with him his two daughters, Jazz and the newborn, Lola, to cheer her. Anna Mellor died in December 1986.

On the Clash's final work, *Cut the Crap*, Strummer shared writing credit with a new partner, Bernard Rhodes. Arriving in late 1985, the album proved a tough listen. Many of its songs had a false bravado about them, and the work's best moment, "This Is England," perhaps implied meanings that Strummer had never hoped for: "This is England/What we're supposed to die for/This is England/And we're never gonna cry no more." Strummer considered taking out ads denouncing the album, but instead he convened the band members at Paul Simonon's house and told them it was over. Rhodes wanted to keep the group going with Simonon as the frontman – "I've got a bunch of assholes," Rhodes confessed, "and I'm going to see it as a bunch of assholes" – but it didn't happen.

Strummer finally knew what he had lost in his firing of Mick Jones. He later blamed the decision on Rhodes, but in 2003, after Strummer's death, Simonon confided to Jones that the firing hadn't been Rhodes' doing; it was Strummer's incentive. At the end of 1985, Strummer hunted down Mick Jones in the Bahamas, where his former partner was recording. Joe apologized for what he had done, for the unkind things he'd said in the press and asked Jones if they could reconstruct the Clash. Mick was grateful for the apology, but he did not want to renew the band. Jones played Strummer tapes of music with his new band, Big Audio Dynamite. "It's the worst load of shit I've ever heard in my life," Strummer told Jones. "Don't put it out, man. Do yourself a favor."

Strummer spent years in a malaise, regretting how he had ruined the Clash. "I learned that fame is an illusion and everything about it is a joke," he told Chris Salewicz. He moved to various cities, drank a lot, turned volatile in a flash. He also provided good music for various films – including Alex Cox's *Sid and Nancy* and *Walker* – and played starring roles in Cox's *Straight to Hell* (1987) and Jim Jarmusch's *Mystery Train* (1989). However, his 1989 solo album, *Earthquake Weather*, felt unfinished and sold only a few thousand copies. "I had to disassemble myself and put the pieces back together," Strummer said in 1988. "I'd lost my parents, my group. You want to think about things. You become a different person."

Gradually, Strummer worked his way back from what he called his "wilderness

years." He'd had two daughters and a long relationship with one woman, Gaby Saltier, and when that ended, he entered a happy marriage, in 1995, with Lucinda Henderson. Beginning in 1999, Strummer made great work again with a new band, the Mescaleros – rhapsodic and forlorn music that searched the world for new sounds, and that was Strummer's way of keeping faith with his earlier values. "I believe that mankind is inherently good," he told Lucinda, "and that good will always triumph."

Strummer kept hope that he could bring the Clash back together. After learning that the band had been elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Strummer hoped to persuade Mick Jones and Paul Simonon to regroup for the occasion. In the early afternoon of December 22nd, 2002, Strummer tried to fax Simonon a letter making his case. He put on a jacket, took the family dogs for a walk in the cold English air, then returned home about 3 p.m. and collapsed on a sofa. When Lucinda found him, his body was already turning cold. He died of a heart defect he had carried throughout his life, without knowing.

IF THERE IS A TRAGEDY IN THE Clash's story, it is not that the band members lost faith in one another, nor that Joe Strummer suffered as a result of sundering that faith. The Clash had always run risks. By doing so, they didn't so much change what rock & roll could be, but instead renewed a promise that had always been in the music: That it was a disruption about liberation, about giving voice and courage to people who were too often denied voice. The Clash went further with this vision than anybody – than the Beatles or the Rolling Stones or Bob Dylan or Public Enemy – because they revisited that ideal, in one form or another, over and over, without settlement. Joe Strummer told filmmaker Don Letts, "We were trying to grope in a socialist way toward some future where the world might be less of a miserable place than it is."

That sort of vision feels like something from a long time ago, another story of death and glory. Popular culture rebellions have grown smaller; popular fears loom bigger. The tragedy of the Clash isn't about the Clash itself – that they fought for something honorable yet defeated one another. The tragedy of the Clash is that we no longer allow the room for their sort of voice. **✶**

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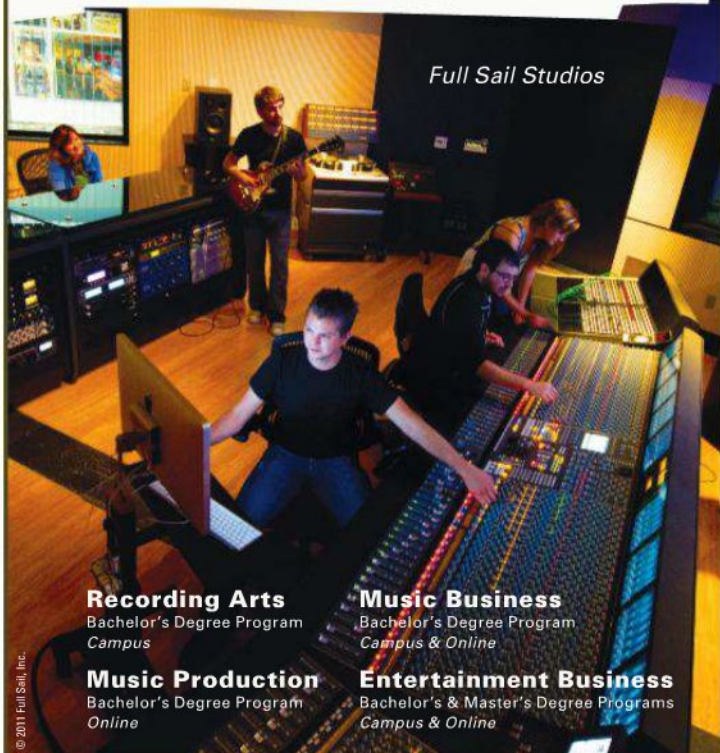
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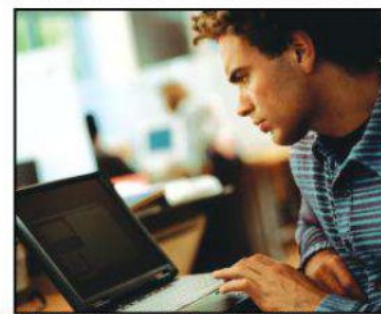
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# CHARTS

## iTUNES TOP 10 SONGS

- Dr. Dre**  
"I Need a Doctor" - *Aftermath*
- Pink**  
"F\*\*kin' Perfect" - *LaFace*
- Wiz Khalifa**  
"Black and Yellow" - *Atlantic*
- Chris Brown**  
"Look at Me Now" - *Jive*
- Bruno Mars**  
"Grenade" - *Elektra*
- Enrique Iglesias**  
"Tonight (I'm F\*\*kin' You)" - *Universal Republic/Universal Music Latino*
- Katy Perry**  
"Firework" - *Capitol*
- Pitbull**  
"Hey Baby (Drop It to the Floor)" - *Mr. 305/Polo Grounds Music/J*
- Far East Movement**  
"Rocketeer" - *Cherrytree/Interscope*
- Diddy - Dirty Money**  
"Coming Home" - *Bad Boy/Interscope*

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## COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- The Decemberists**  
*The King Is Dead* - *Capitol*
- Iron and Wine**  
*Kiss Each Other Clean* - *Warner Bros.*
- Deerhoof**  
*Deerhoof Vs. Evil* - *Polyvinyl*
- Destroyer**  
*Kaputt* - *Merge*
- Smith Westerns**  
*Dye It Blond* - *Fat Possum*
- Tapes 'n Tapes**  
*Outside* - *Ibid*
- Tennis**  
*Cape Dory* - *Fat Possum*
- Mogwai**  
*Hardcore Will Never Die, But You Will* - *Sub Pop*
- Cold War Kids**  
*Mine Is Yours* - *Downtown*
- Cage the Elephant**  
*Thank You Happy Birthday* - *Jive*



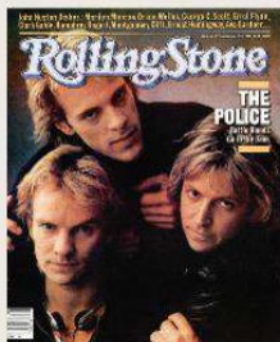
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## From the Vault

RS 337, February 19th, 1981

### TOP 10 SINGLES

- Dolly Parton**  
"9 to 5" - *RCA*
- Eddie Rabbitt**  
"I Love a Rainy Night" - *Elektra*
- Kool and the Gang**  
"Celebration" - *De-Lite*
- John Lennon**  
"Woman" - *Geffen*
- Blondie**  
"The Tide Is High" - *Chrysalis*
- REO Speedwagon**  
"Keep On Loving You" - *Epic*
- Styx**  
"The Best of Times" - *A&M*
- Delbert McClinton**  
"Giving It Up for Your Love" - *Capitol*
- Dan Fogelberg**  
"Same Old Lang Syne" - *Full Moon*
- Steely Dan**  
"Hey Nineteen" - *MCA*



### On the Cover

"The most efficient way of running the group is to have me sing, because I'm a good singer. It's a heavy responsibility. The other two write songs, but in their hearts, they hope that Sting is going to come out with the hits, the ones that get played on the radio."

—Sting

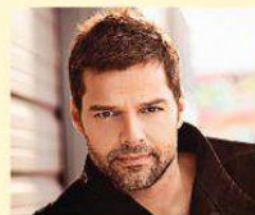
## Top 40 Albums

- Nicki Minaj**  
*Pink Friday - Young Money/Cash Money/Universal Motown*
- Red**  
*Until We Have Faces* - *Essential*
- Ricky Martin**  
*Musica + Alma + Sexo* - *Sony Music Latin*
- Bruno Mars**  
*Doo-Wops & Hooligans* - *Elektra*
- Rihanna**  
*Loud* - *Def Jam*
- Kidz Bop Kids**  
*Kidz Bop 19* - *Razor & Tie*
- Jason Aldean**  
*My Kinda Party* - *Broken Bow*
- Taylor Swift**  
*Speak Now* - *Big Machine*
- Pink**  
*Greatest Hits ... So Far!!!* - *LaFace*
- Eminem**  
*Recovery* - *Shady/Aftermath*
- Mumford and Sons**  
*Sigh No More* - *Glassnote*
- The Civil Wars**  
*Barton Hollow* - *Sensibility*
- Katy Perry**  
*Teenage Dream* - *Capitol*
- Bob Marley and the Wailers**  
*Live Forever: September 23, 1980, Stanley Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA* - *Tuff Gong/Island*
- 2011 Grammy Nominees**  
*Various Artists* - *Grammy/Jive*
- Jamie Foxx**  
*Best Night of My Life* - *J*
- Justin Bieber**  
*My World 2.0* - *RBMG/Island*
- R. Kelly**  
*Love Letter* - *Jive*
- The Decemberists**  
*The King Is Dead* - *Capitol*
- Black Eyed Peas**  
*The Beginning* - *Interscope*
- The Black Keys**  
*Brothers* - *Nonesuch*
- Kanye West**  
*My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* - *Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam*
- Lady Antebellum**  
*Need You Now* - *Capitol Nashville*
- Kid Rock**  
*Born Free* - *Top Dog/Atlantic*
- Lil Wayne**  
*I Am Not a Human Being - Cash Money/Universal Motown*
- Amos Lee**  
*Mission Bell* - *Blue Note*
- Gregg Allman**  
*Low Country Blues* - *Rounder*
- T.I.**  
*No Mercy* - *Grand Hustle/Atlantic*
- WOW Gospel 2011**  
*Various Artists* - *Word-Curb/EMI CMG/Verity*
- Zac Brown Band**  
*You Get What You Give* - *Southern Ground/Roar/Bigger Picture/Atlantic*
- Bon Jovi**  
*Greatest Hits* - *Island*
- Rascal Flatts**  
*Nothing Like This* - *Big Machine*
- Keyshia Cole**  
*Calling All Hearts* - *Geffen*
- Kenny Chesney**  
*Hemingway's Whiskey* - *BNA*
- Iron and Wine**  
*Kiss Each Other Clean* - *Warner Bros.*
- Glee: The Music**  
*Season 2, Volume 4* - *20th Century Fox TV/Columbia*
- The Band Perry**  
*The Band Perry* - *Republic Nashville*
- Country Strong**  
*Soundtrack* - *RCA Nashville*
- Florence and the Machine**  
*Lungs* - *Universal Republic*
- Linkin Park**  
*A Thousand Suns* - *Machine Shop*



### Seeing Red

Thanks to a Conan appearance and their aggro Christian-radio hit "Faceless," Tennessee crew Red sold 43,000 copies - the week's highest debut.



### Ricky, You So Fine

After coming out and writing a bestselling memoir, Martin released his first album in six years - it sold 32,000 copies in its first week.



### Keepin' It Civil

Nashville harmony duo the Civil Wars only met in 2008, but their iTunes Single of the Week, "Barton Hollow," helped their first LP sell 24,676 copies.



### Famous Amos?

Lee's *Mission Bell* became the lowest-selling Number One LP in SoundScan history last week - and then fell 25 spots in its second week.

00 Chart position on Feb. 9th, 2011  
00 Chart position on Feb. 2nd, 2011  
NEW New Entry  
2ND Re-Entry  
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JOSEPH ANTHONY BAKER; OMAR CRUZ; TEC PETAJA; HARPER SMITH; SANDY KIM; SEAN BERRY



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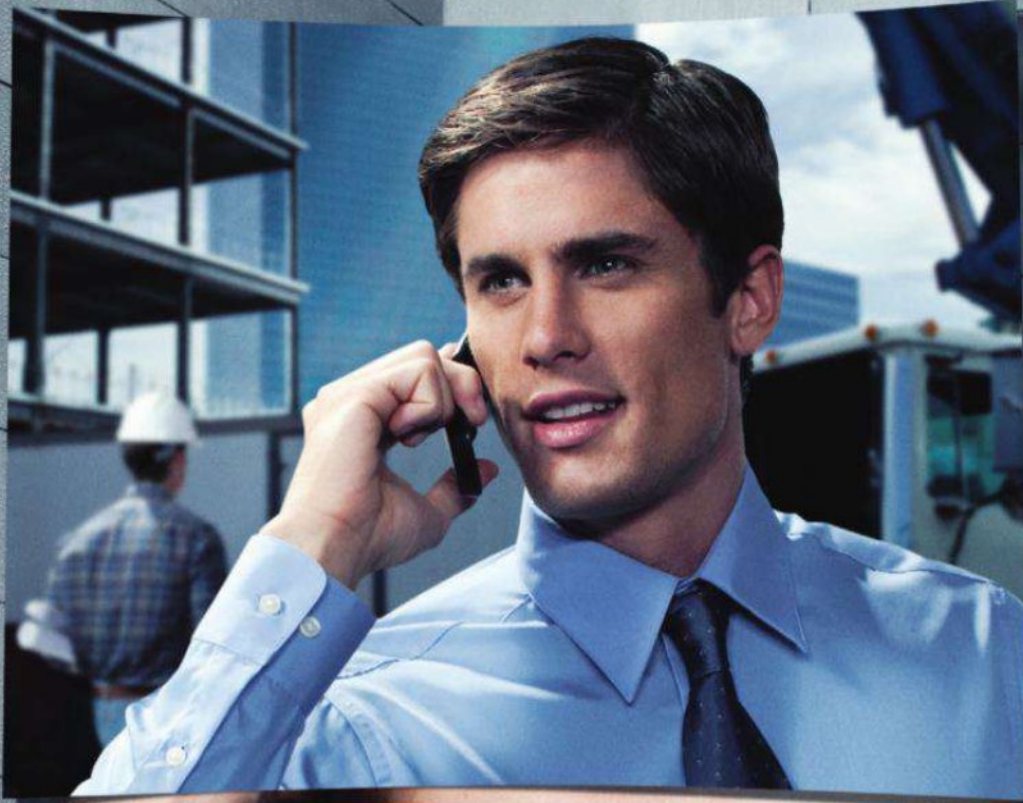
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